Here & Now.

NYPL

15th March 1934

Here & Now.

NYPL

Thursday March 15th 1934

"How would you bring up a boy if you had one?"
she asked. "Eton & Oxford – that sort of thing.
The butler is no longer in the room" she added,
as Eleanor hesitated. "~~It's odd, she~~
said, how afraid we still are of the other sex!"
"~~The war's made such a difference" said Eleanor~~
~~The war changed one's feelings so much~~" said
Eleanor. "I mean if that's ~~the~~ sort of education
that brought about the war – ~~I~~ I mean
shutting people up in different compartments."
She was thinking of Nicholas: ~~that~~ the odd looking
man who used to take her out to dine
sometimes at odd places. ~~We all live such~~
~~different lives~~, we dont know each other;
we dont know ourselves perhaps. That's why
we torture each other.
Perhaps thats why we make ~~these~~ such hideous mistakes –
why we torture each other so." She paused
trying to think back to over things she had heard
people saying: "You say half your life was
wasted; ~~I've heard~~ Robby says the same thing.
Why were they wasted? Only because
people didn't know. ~~They were~~
~~It wasn't done deliberately~~. Well, people
dont want to waste each other's lives: only
they dont know each other.
They sat silent
"I ought to have been a farmer," Kitty suddenly
burst out. "Look at my hands." She held
out her hands. "Look at these stout little
stubby fingers. And I had to be a young
lady in a white satin dress." She jerked
her head up at the picture over the fire.

I shd. have liked
to spend my life
with cows, &
pigs – horses

NYPL

Thats the ~~crime~~ real ~~crime~~ grudge I have against them"
she said bitterly. "Not that they wouldnt give us
votes, but that they wouldnt let us work.
Talk of the sufferings of the unemployed! What about a
healthy young woman ~~who was~~ longing to use her
brains & her hands & ~~was~~ forced to sit in a
drawingroom ~~handing out tea~~. ~~— why~~!
~~What did they gain by it, Eleanor~~! ~~Thats the~~
What was the point of it? one moment she said
Eleanor wished she could remember the steps of the
argument. She had discussed it with Nicholas
only the other day in a small restaurant in Soho.
There were two men sitting at the next table,
with a girl, & she had a feather in her hat:
Nicholas had insisted upon paying for lunch,
which had made her unhappy, because he was
very poor: & they had had a bottle of wine.
~~"I think its something~~ to do with fear" she said.
I'm trying to remember an argument I had the other day
with a man I know" she explained —
who makes up theories about ~~human~~ why
people do the things they do do." I think its something to
~~Fear of age of the most~~
do with fear. Fear of what people will say; fear
of society; fear of other peoples getting what you've got
fear of poverty. ridicule. Yes fear, he said,
is the most degrading of all human passions &
the commonest."

She looked straight at Eleanor out of her
Calm blue eyes, as if she were a wise child
repeating a lesson.

~~He~~ Kitty laughed. Somehow the thought
of Eleanor discussing fear with an unknown man
in a restaurant amused her.

"I wish you'd ask me to meet him" she said.

by law.
Not allowed to
earn their living
by law.

NYPL

He's a foreigner" said Eleanor: "with ~~a great zest~~ of the job,
~~as they generally have. You can discuss anything~~
~~with him~~ I used to like him; I still suspect he's a
bit of a fraud: & I do like him; yes, I like him
very much indeed. "I like talking openly to men;" she
said. ~~They have such very odd ideas about women.~~
That's a ~~great~~ gain. I can say to Nicholas
things I never dreamt of saying to my own brothers.
Why ~~was~~ I ^was^ never in love; for instance." "& what
~~you never~~ ^they^ were!" said Kitty.
I felt funny talking, & for Morris." And his
feelings are so interesting: he's always loved men,
not women; & how Rose loves women & not men.
~~And~~ Life's much more interesting than it was
when I was a girl. ~~How many more~~ And
then we discuss the future; & how to educate
people so that they aren't afraid of each other.
which is what I was coming to." she concluded
when you shut-up people a ~~separate compartments~~,
at Oxford, like Edward, you ~~because their~~ fear:
~~that what wrong with Edward~~. bolstering:
hardly up with other people's opinions — I'm a
fellow of this college; ~~&~~ I'm this that & the
other — What it really ~~for is~~ does is to cut him
all from other people: which is why we
laugh at him; & then they make him a
Master of a College; & so it ~~then~~ goes on. —
Whereas the real way would be to
take away all barriers; instead of inventing
them; & ~~then we th~~ things like titles,
~~honours~~; & the worst of all Power. That's
what makes men ~~so~~ so inhuman, Kitty, & ~~I hate~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~make you~~
24 power you know. ~~Go see~~
~~do what I think right.~~ Because then they can ~~make~~ force other people
to do what they want."

NYPL

"It's that that makes people so inhuman, Kitty".
She stopped.

"Power" ~~sa~~ Kitty repeated. "Yes," she said.
But it has an extraordinary fascination. I find
it quite hard myself" she said, "to give up the
little bit of power I had: ~~being Lady Lasswade, you~~
~~know~~. No more guards opening doors, footmen
touching their hats. Now I'm ~~only a~~ pensioned off,
like an old servant. ~~And everything goes to my~~
~~daughter in law. Everything goes in one moment.~~
~~the settlement,~~ ~~And they'll~~ I'll ~~never~~
walk in those woods again!"

But I
don't mind
that.

It's the
thought that

The tears had come to her eyes. She pulled out
her handkerchief & dabbed them, ~~like a~~ roughly,
like a schoolboy
"But it's absurd" she said. "— to cry for a wood,
when there's so much else to cry about!"
"but it's absurd, she repeated, what a hold a place
can have on one?" Walking with Edward. &
hearing the pigeons, & thinking I should never
hear them again them again there ... I
used to ~~get up~~ go out in the early morning
before anyone was up & walk in the woods!"
That's what I mind, & ~~not the things one's expected~~
~~to mind~~"! not this: They they can have
welcome. I ~~never~~ always ~~hated~~ this. All
~~those people~~. The women such fools. & the
men, as you say; ~~the men~~ caring for nothing
but power. And what have they done
with their power? Made a jolly mess of it,
if you ask me. ~~Quite~~
They sat listening to the roar of traffic &
~~street~~ which came through the open window.
Somebody was playing a doleful tune upon a
cornet. There was a ~~ragged~~ ~~looking~~

that and,
to come here —

NYPL

spasmodic hooting of cars at the corner. ~~A clock struck~~
The little clock on the mantelpiece ~~ch~~ ~~briskly~~ &
chimed out the hour with rapid little strokes:
Eleanor began to draw the white gloves onto her
fingers: they were new, & fitted tightly.
“~~I must be~~ well off” she said.
“Another committee?” said ~~Ed~~ Kitty
“No. Only my dinner to cook!”
“~~Won't~~ you'll come & stay with me?” said
~~Eleanor~~, Kitty, as they got up & stood for a
moment facing each other. “It's going to be a
~~perfect~~ very dull home” she said. “It's only an ordinary
ham ~~farm~~ now” she mentioned. “And ~~its~~ a retired
Colstam lived there, who planted it all over
with fir trees; fir trees, of all trees the trees
I hate most. But when I've cut them down, &
dug a few beds . . .” she paused, looking out
of the window. “And spring's lovely there” she
said. “We'll put on our oldest things & walk
for miles & miles over the moor!” The trees in the square
They looked at the street.
were green: people with little bags in their
hands were hurrying past — the usual
stream of clerks & business people, hurrying
along, after the days work.
“~~I prefer this really~~” ~~said Eleanor.~~
“I really like this ~~better~~” said Eleanor.
~~I like human beings~~. I ~~like~~ I dont
think I should be happy living on a moor.
I like human beings. They interest me so!”
Kitty laughed.
“It takes all sorts to make a world, as
well Annie Colingwds” she remarked.
She went with Eleanor to the door.

NYP

"A flower for your button hole" she said, as she kissed her. She broke off some of the flowers in the gilt basket, by the door. & ~~put them into~~ gave them to Eleanor.

"But that's wicked" said Eleanor.

"They'll die anyhow in this hot room" said Kitty.

Eleanor went rather slowly down the great staircase. ~~In the hall~~ There would be a footman looking somewhere she supposed: she held herself rather straighter than usual. But the door was open: there was a commotion in the hall; somebody was coming in: For a moment she had a sight of a very beautiful woman, ~~Kitty's daughter in law, she supposed~~; in black, coming in from the car outside. ~~They passed each other, she was~~ Kitty's daughter in law, Eleanor supposed; as they glanced at each other. Then she walked out into the street, a little excited, stimulated.

"But they are extraordinarily beautiful" she said to herself, as if she were continuing an argument confuting someone. "They hold themselves so well. ~~And~~ They dress so beautifully." And I felt so awkward, like a piano tuner" a superior piano tuner, one ~~to~~ who's known better days." She stood at the corner, waiting, & smiling to herself. The impression of the big room was rapidly wearing off. ~~But it had been~~ quite ~~different.~~ ~~She resented to~~ went ~~back to the~~ beginning: She walked on.

"But ~~you know~~ Nevertheless it's true" she said: "I couldn't have dined there in my old clothes. I couldn't now." And she went on, with her eye glancing over the shop windows, with all their clothes – Larger standards. She thinks then every clothes;

NYPL

8

If she had worn that, a hat — she stopped, & seemed lately in different clothes; How queer the thing! So that the thought slightly excited her.

But then isn't that very queer, she [thought]: Here am I a middle aged woman; & something happens — let me see what? What do I feel! How could I describe it? Its a sort of effervescence ~~down~~ on ones skin; something superficial, but extremely sensitive; a bloom a sensation — a vibration! And the Beauty? something that gives people immensely a zest ... ~~how~~ But to imagine as she had to go back to something so long distant. It was easier, standing upon the pavement, to think of. Look at that girl — forget to think what her feelings were; surely she was of the class that could not wear such clothes: & the dressmaker expert class. And then, under the grating — she had walked on — she saw oddly of hardware assorted things: people were tying wooden chair legs; & there was also a flat board, on which a fat lady was ironing clothes; & a name on a board, saying that accordion pleating was done: there hats were laid in a wholesale shop: thousands of hats were stuck on top of each other.

I have lost the sensation already she thought to herself.

She had meant to use the visit, as an argument, only because nowadays, after the war, so many people said, ... She assured herself that she had not forgotten her bag: she was holding Kitty's flowers tightly, in one hand, her bag in the other. So many people talked, yes, about all kinds of odd things. ~~In her bag~~ And after, she felt, what we need is

NYPL

9

some comprehensive mind, some mind so vast that it has
ceased to be a mind, which will understand everything
as it is this moment: Edward knows about the past, she
thought: & Morris the future; ~~people~~ you can say
that's going to be, anything you choose: what we want is
somebody who will gather ~~us~~ all up. &
then say look here. ~~There is what this~~ She
paused in Oxford Street. The traffic came streaming
& the people on the pavement. We live in
little shacks & sheds: also we live underground:
we live in rails: who will ever understand us!
What we do is to cease to try: & get what is
nice eating? ~~What is more to be~~ I would
like to live a thousand years, she thought,
trying different experiments, & solutions: & then one
day, perhaps ~~some~~ just as one was giving
it up, like touching a bell, by mistake — "
Oh dear me, what nonsense I'm talking" she
thought. But ~~the point of you go about~~
In some books she had read, the ~~m~~ writer had
had an experience which solved all human
difficulties: But owing to her ~~ba~~ wit,
she was rather excited. And she thought she had
spoken the truth; Kitty said one could live on the
moon. No I said, I find people interesting:
And she had said (last night to Nicholas)
It's so easy to make theories; what is hard is
not to scamp the actual thing: there is all very
well, she had said. I like dining with you —
but how I wish you would let me pay the bill —
but, if you dont go & see these people who are
so wicked, then you dont know them: if you
just live & denounce the politician. But
how would you govern England? And he had
said the women given full power — But

NYPL

Nicholas. haven't we been saying that power is wrong?
Yes he said: we have to devise something that will
take its place, as a drug: & I said, what?
And he said, 'Everybody has so much that is
unused in them. Let us find out how to use it.
Ah but I am tired of talk I said Couldn't we
find something to do? And all we could
think of was to take parties of children to the
British Museum. And that's the trouble. I said,
all these suggestions seem so futile. My dear
Eleanor, he said, spreading his fingers out,
after the state of mind that changes—' But
how many thousand years will it take, I asked him:
And it seemed so terrible: there are we, two
people of good will, but all the rest of the world
so indifferent. There was a cocktailers on the
counter & the Italian waiter heard it. Only
said Nicholas, because he has a terrible life,
poor fellow. Dear me; she stopped.
Could you have said

Eleanor walked slowly down the great staircase.
She glanced at a ~~great pale~~ picture of Venice
with pale green water & lemon coloured buildings.
But there would be a footman lurking about
somewhere, she supposed, & she held herself rather
more stiffly than usual, & walked down
the stairs. Bright sunshine fell on the
black & white slabs: the front door was
open: there was some commotion. A
lady was coming in. They passed each
other in the hall. ~~For a moment~~
& gave each other one glance. She
was a young woman, very beautiful, dressed in
black. She bent her head, half smiled &
passed on. "That's Kitty's daughter-in-law"

NYPL

she said to herself, as she stepped into the street.
"No I'll walk thank you" she said to the footman, who
offered to fetch a cab. She so felt oddly
excited & stimulated. Her lips moved, as she
said to herself, "~~But~~ they move so beautifully, they
dress so well." "I felt ~~myself~~" she said, as if
she were describing the scene to somebody
rather like a piano tuner, a piano tuner 'who's
known better days. But it's well worth seeing;
it's so beautiful." ~~the shop~~ She walked
quickly ~~down~~ along, ~~holding the flowers rather~~
~~tightly~~ 'Have in the direction of Oxford Street.
Have I forgotten my bag?" she suddenly asked
herself. As she had it under her arm, only she
was holding the flowers so tight that she ~~had~~
~~forgotten~~ did not feel it. ~~She~~ Her lips moved,
and she stood by ~~the~~ a crossing. She ~~told herself~~
and she told herself the story of the afternoon;
And they showed me into a very large drawing room,
all white & gold, & I sat down by the fire.
And then Kitty came in, with her dog.,
No she's not really changed.. ~~Except~~ she's rubbled in that it!
older perhaps. she's less — well
She's fond of the house, you see, she's going to
live by herself." To whom was she telling this
story? to Rose, or to Bobby? ~~or~~ ~~or~~. But ~~what~~
she wanted, as she crossed the street, to tell
something else
it to Nicholas. She wanted to tell him —
Here she came to a shop window, in which
she saw herself reflected against something
dark. " So that was what I looked
like" she said, not to him, to herself.
"Yes the piano tuner." ~~No~~, she was
dressed all right, but — ~~she looks~~
There were dresses in the next window.

NYPL

She arrayed herself in a beautiful ivory dress that
tapered off in a glittering scaly train: "Like that"
she said. "Yes I would come into the room..
dressed like that... I can still feel it" A
recollection had come back to her of the then
feeling of ivory clothes & bare arms, when she had
dined out. "I can still feel it" she repeated,
~~back but then~~ she looked at a young woman who
was ~~lost~~ glancing at the window too. "She feels it"
she added. "Isn't it odd! But I told her
I didn't: I said to Kitty," she continued,
walking on, "I don't mind about clothes now,
three & eleven three at Whiteley, I said". She
glanced at her gloves. "Ah well, Nicholas,
human nature's an awfully queer 'mix up';
but you can change it, you were saying. Yes, I
agree. Yes, but not if you set making
theories: What's so difficult is to say things
there in the person's own room. ~~What~~ I then
used to do" she continued. "I said to Kitty,
when she asked me how to educate her boys,
I was Don't bring them up to have power, Kitty.
Power's what makes them barbarians. But it
sounded a little silly in that room, with the
menservants coming in & out. — Two men,
just to clear away tea. And she said to me,
But you can't change human nature. ~~And~~
~~I met the daughter in law as I went out.~~
It's so easy for you & me, Nicholas" she
continued, dining together in a restaurant —
She saw him; leaning over the table; & behind
him there was a greyish pink cockatoo, on the
counter, beside a basket of fruit. "You
~~say of women, she said, addressing Nicholas~~
What matters is the state of mind, Eleanor.

NYPL

"Its what people think that matters Eleanor" she repeated
imitating Nicholas's foreign accent. That may be true:
but then how to change it? I know we two
want to change the world; but we're only two
people, & the rest of the world is so indifferent.
I met her daughter in law coming in. And
Everybody has so many feelings that they do not
value. In our business is to help each other not to be
afraid. Well I said that too" she said.
She glanced down into the basement of one of the
houses she was passing. She ~~had~~ was walking
down a dingy eighteenth century street, in whose
basements different trades were carried on.
There were men in ~~shirt~~ aprons & shirt sleeves
doing something with turned pieces of wood,
chair legs perhaps. There were pots of glue on
benches. She read a plate over the next door.
"Accordion pleating done here." ~~Next~~ In the
basement next door, a big tree grew. Its
fingershaped leaves spread out like the palms of
hands over the window. Within she could see
women ironing clothes on long trestle tables.
"This is the part of London I like" she said.
It her lungs is relaxed: she felt softened, &
lost her the tension she had felt on leaving
Grosvenor Square. "How quickly one loses-
what d'you call it? -" she mused, "when one's
been in a strange house, & met ..." The
vision of the young woman in black she had
passed in the hall was losing its distinctness.
"Poor Kitty" she said to herself, its had after all
three years — there were tears in her eyes —
& she wiped her eyes with her pocket
handkerchief — She was always rather
rough: we broke the swing in the garden: she

NYPL

ought never to have married that nice dull man: But how can one know what one wants when one's very young? And they wanted her to marry them. In those days you see, Everybody would say What a Great marriage! She was the daughter of Dr. Malone who married my cousin Rose. And I used to stay with them when I was a girl.. Yes we were brought up just in the ~~same~~ ordinary way of those times: If I stayed away I would take a maid. Yes, but then Nicholas, if men ~~are~~ do make themselves unpleasant to girls travelling alone. That's another ~~the~~ problem that nobody has ~~faced~~ yet. If a girl cant travel ~~alone~~, if a girl cant walk about ~~this~~ alone. ~~Sort of neighbourhood~~ —" The street was one of those dingy streets full of racing news: full of Italians & French shops; & little shoddy dress shops, where girls with bright lips were already parading.

"But then a man feels ~~that~~ no shame about his sexual passions does he? ~~And~~ now if she can prevent herself from having children?" She looked rather furtively at ~~the~~ a shady little shop with red rubber tubes in the window.

in forces

A woman's chastity may ~~after all, as you say,~~ be nothing.. Yes but my dear Nicholas; — she saw the grey pink cockatoo hopping on its perch — But it ~~much~~ can one still too early to say? yet! You've no ~~conception~~ idea, Nicholas, how that conception was impressed upon us as girls...

If it hadnt been for the Levys.. You know I visited the poor." She stopped.

Eleanor broods they used to say

No I dont think I ever felt any strong physical

NYPL

15

but was that odd, considering! And then. Nicholas
the Economic question: She had to pay for her child.
~~Let alone~~ the social stigma. My mother, she
continued, Every time she must have said,
Even in the very moment — she was a woman
who had money: but even so, think, when you'd
had five children already. What I mean is, she
concluded, It must have been so bad for the
child too, when she was afraid — at the most
critical moment. Dont you think that, psychologically
speaking?" I wish the waiter wouldn't
tease the cockatoo" she exclaimed & ~~that you~~ I wish
had ~~would~~ let me pay the bill, ~~when~~ as ~~too~~ he's ~~you~~ ~~paid~~ so hard up,
~~Last time~~, I ordered the wine."
She ~~use~~ of his own catchword brought him so
vividly before her that she saw him ~~the waiter~~
~~teasing the cockatoo~~; & Nicholas paying the bill.
"And I will not dine with you again if you
insist on paying" she said "when you're so hard up":
she ~~stopped~~ looked at in at a baker's shop, &
How often ~~she~~ He had insisted, with his curious
pride, upon paying the bill.

So thought as she ~~looked at a~~ watched a
child running along the gutter with a hoop,
how arguing like this with ones friends, or
describing to them some scene that will amuse them —
Nicholas was extraordinarily ~~curious~~ interested
in every "aspect of human life" — (~~such~~ so
like all foreigners he used words straight out of
books) : ~~so that~~ she & there was a
running current of argument between them;
about politics, sex, religion: "That is
perhaps the test of ~~real~~ being real friends" she said.
thinking I'll tell him that, or that will amuse him:
~~so that~~ & Things dont stop you know" she

Nicholas had

without
her thinking
arguing with
people when you
were not with them,
[illegible] them generally a part of
letting them
[illegible] them.
thinking [illegible] Bobby
Then she'd tell
that Nicholas:
the impetus of his
came from ideas.

NYPL

16

she said to herself: & thats why life gets steadily more
interesting because one is not so set on, sex; not so shy:
things in themselves become so tremendously interesting, as
one grows older, because it doesnt matter to me what
happens to me. But the mind gets no older does it?
she said. My mind gets fuller. Fuller, now that all
the personal questions are over: & I neednt be home to
dine with Papa" she added. "No I shall dine out
somewhere." Why didnt I ask Delia to meet me!
~~Or I might have rung up Rose~~: I'm not sure if
Bobby is in London" she said. "Let me think:
~~is there anyone I could dine with? I want to~~
She had come out the way in Oxford Street. She stretched out
her arm & looked at the watch on her wrist.
The whole section from now till 10 the next
morning was free. Five hours till she reached
12 at the top of the watch. And what should
she do with them? That little block of time
was hers beyond a doubt. How to spend it?
How to fill it completely, satisfactorily! So
often she had given it up, being at home. Now
6h it seemed like a present: a sum given her to
spend. She could think of nobody to dine with:
Bobby away; Morris in London but engaged;
Delia in London but engaged: Nicholas, Miriam,
the van Hughs seven or eight names; ~~but all were~~
~~unsuitable~~: & ~~she had not the courage to~~
It struck her that there ought to be a
list in telephone boxes of people wanting to dine
with one: anybody. Human society was badly
organised. All this energy ~~affection~~
~~running~~ to waste, she thought: as people
~~rushed~~ ~~&~~ ~~passed~~ jostled past her, or came
~~walking~~ more slowly, and they too would like to
dine with somebody, to exchange what
that poorish looking woman might call the
There are thousands of
time of day

NYPL

things I want to talk about the raid; & nobody to
say them to. You cant stop a stranger in Oxford
Street — but if you were in Africa or even in some
remote part of Wales you could" She remembered
walking in a valley in Wales, alone: & coming towards her was a
solitary man: & instead of passing on the path, like the —
Kellys daughter in law, as they were the only people in
the valley it seemed inhuman. Good afternoon, she said to
him: & ~~he said~~ so they had got into talk;
he was a builder out of work, she remembered;
that was the natural way of life. Yes.. But Nicholas
she added, now that we have reached a certain
stage of civilisation, mustnt we try to unlearn
certain things! Take competition that breeds fear,
that puts up these barriers, why not, in time,
lower the barriers, cease to compete? I mean,
if you say that there is enough money to go round:
No thats Renny" she added. "Its Renny
who says theres enough money: but Renny says —
she wondered, could she get hold of Renny —
Maggie? No she said rather sadly,
when people are as happy together as they are,
its ~~difficult, interrupting~~. ~~No said~~
~~Nicholas~~. As ~~happy as they are~~: glad to be
alone together in the evening; Damn that
telephone" he moans ?ag. Then Elvira.
She was in Italy. She had they all find
different ways of living, people now, she thought,
walking on. ~~They have that odd~~
~~relationships~~. It isnt necessary to marry.. "It is not a
~~Elvira~~ Nicholas says to me, Please
physical relationship between us" Please
try to understand. "In a way I love Ellen:
she loves me: but ...." You have always
loved your own sex?" I said to him. "Dont
well then, he decided, "I will dine — afterwards"

NYP

Restaurant

"I will dine here."   through the glass swing door of a cheap yellow   18

She ~~walked~~ stopped & went, as if this had been her goal all the time.

Music was playing on the ground floor. Waitresses with frilled caps were running about. All the little tables seemed occupied. There were red & white walls, & red seats, & sounds; a great air of bustle — festivity. ~~It Oxford Street~~ pullulating & humming seemed to have settled, like a clustering bee, on a rather cheap but rather exciting flower. She was amused & stimulated by the sight of the people, by the music, by the clatter of plates & knives & forks. She felt swept into a circle of rather unreal & pretentious & cheap & gay life; Dinner here would not be expensive: it would be pretentious: ~~the room~~ But every table seemed to be taken. She looked round. Every~~body was~~ People were eating, laughing, talking; all companioned, seemed for a second, as if she = had alone had strayed into from outside into what was already in full swing: vociferous; self absorbed; & yet she had no feeling of loneliness or shyness ~~or~~ No, she liked the sense of taking her place unnoticed, unobserved — if indeed there was a place to take. She looked round, to see ~~if there~~ where was an empty table; They were all full. She would have to go upstairs. But over there, rather in a corner, a man was paying his bill. She ~~have~~ waited. He got up, brushed the crumbs from his waistcoat & went. She took her seat. The table was covered with crumbs & glasses. The waitress swept it clean. Eleanor took up the stained card & considered — what should she have? The usual dinner. Yes it saved trouble. And

NYPL

half a bottle of wine.

She sat waiting. From where she sat she could see round a screen. She could see the mechanism of the place. The waitresses went & shouted orders; & there was a lift & they gathered round the lift & they took the dishes as they came up, & put them on the trays. But who put the ~~hot~~ dishes on the trays? Down below there must be a vast kitchen, with men running to & fro & shouting out, Two – veal here for two: ~~hot~~ steak & kidney, ~~beans~~ & green & roast chicken: only probably they had other odd short-words. but what! Everything was going with a rhythm & a swing: the people taking their seats, the waitresses taking their orders, & then the food ~~was~~ rose from the basement, was distributed. She hardly felt caught in, & she felt the gaiety the energy of the abandonment. The music – only a few fiddles somehow – made a regular beat of sound, so as if it were bringing out with its regular rhythm whatever was beneath the words, & ~~cabet~~ underlying them, & giving them the meaning which so that she could see girls & young men leaning while they talked, as if to let the sound of the romantic sentimental rhythm carry on their words. There were couples everywhere. Young men & young women. in their best clothes. Most of them brushed up, out for an evening. ~~were~~ had a look of silent sa importance; they did not talk very much; they seemed content to hear the music, & the rattle of knives & forks. And many of the diners were soldiery like husky, & quite silent, but they too had an absorbed, rather solemn air, as if within ~~they had~~ the presence of all this ~~& then they so~~ ~~the ways to her, that one, the 7.~~

NYPL

none, & the colour, & the gentlemen led & stalked & interested them. Sometimes a girl would wait & waiting for the right one would take a powder puff out of her bag & puff carefully & deliberately powder her face while the young man watched her.

Yes, said Eleanor, as if she were confirming something, "~~I love them.~~ ~~I mean its cheap~~ its ordinary but ~~what~~ [illegible] what a sense there is of fun & adventure & stir? It is the stirring of love; they are all preening & making: ~~they are~~ like — like —" she hesitated. She was talking to Kitty: she was saying to Kitty, "Don't you see, as in the moon, there would be — let me see what?" And she thought of the country; of a pool of water; of a horse; of a pony perhaps — But she could not see anything strongly enough in comparison with this movement & stir; ~~Only~~ Only she wished she could break the silence: it seemed to her that there was an enormous potency in all these middle class — she respected her disciples.

Most of them rather poor; there is none of them cultivated, or educated. They come from little homes with sashes round the waist: ~~Here~~ She looked more attentively. ~~No one had~~ There was something cheap about the clothes. Their shoes were very shiny ~~about~~

And Renny says, they don't know what they you may be right: she wait, she said.

NYPL

thought of the definiteness of her face: with the great nose, &
dark foreign eyes: & how emphatically he said
Its all damned rot; But ~~what can you~~
thats only all show, Reggy, she said. The music
the doors opening into the street, the waiters
shouting their orders, the drinks arriving: Energy
desire — love, the effort to create something;
the putting on of shiny shoes, the powdering —
longing — all seemed to her an effort, like
hands reaching out, or the sudden opening of a
bud on a tree. But there is a more
beautiful one, she said to Kitty. Look at her —
look at him. She was looking at a couple:
he might be a hairdresser; she a girl in a
manicure shop, for they were both lustrous, &
rather showy. Look how he puts it on —
the pose of being how heartily the master;
They are playing at the game of wealth &
leisure; they are acting to each other…
Thats silly that way: Thats only because they
are pretending: but the energy is there, if
ask — — . Her dinner was served.
How many women — there were going to be.
Hors d'oeuvres, ~~fish~~, & soup clear or thick,
fish, — Altogether it was rather light, every
table had a red-shaded lamp: &
on every table was a ~~&~~ silver vase, like a
couch, & two or three flowers. She had
laid her flowers, her bag & her gloves on the
table by her side. Out of the window down
she could see a slice of Oxford Street.
Everybody was eating though there rather was.

NYPL

NY.

clumsy [illegible] women; defiantly, saying that
it was nothing strange to them: that they were used
to this: whereas most nights they sat down to a
dish from the gas oven in the room next
the kitchen. This is their dream, their vision.
she repeated. ~~If this were their dream,~~ Why was
this their dream? Why had this long thing
Dream been revealed. the ~~the~~ silver vans. & the
red shaded lamps? Why did they accept this?
Did they like it. did they enjoy it? Was
it not that they were afraid; because
they were supposed to like it! They were
forced to dress like that! They were
shovelled into it; just as the food was
shovelled into the lift. And yet the
feeling. & the opulence was there: it was
better than the moon: it was moving; &
exciting — if only she had the courage to
turn round & talk to somebody, to break
up the solemn current which they were
all giving to something that they did not
really believe in. The calls of the waiters,
the accent of the food, the sense of men
in ~~the hot~~ among hot ovens peeping as they
served at this strange monstrous food
began to oppress her.
[illegible] could break free. If we would, she said
hotly.

[illegible] very crowded tonight?" she said
to the waiter who brought her a slice of cake
with little pink buttons on it. He
smiled at her. "Yes m'm" said the waiter.

NYPL

She smiled; but it was a strained, mechanical smile, ~~as~~
as if she were afraid to let something natural in her
come to the surface.

But then you can't deny, said Eleanor to
Kennedy, that there is a feeling among us...
something I can't get at..
And why shouldn't we do something else with it? she
asked.
Oh dear, oh dear, she said to herself with a
rush of emotion, "why do we torture each other so?"
It was perhaps the sense bursting out again that
gave her a pity for human beings — suppressing them:
smiles, dressing up, pretending: knocking with their
meretricious [illegible], — for example her white gloves —
when all the ~~time~~ there was something
underneath which [illegible] to get round this
imposition this skinny veneer, these little
cheapnesses, lazinesses, confused attempts to
conform: to be like each other. Oh dear,
she replied. if only the thing would happen that
would set us free: for a moment she
thought ~~of probably~~ back, the ~~cardboard~~ of [illegible] —
flanks on the stage falling apart.
The ~~door~~ swing door thudded; a bit of
waitresses came through carrying trays. The third
had for a moment ~~symbolised~~ seemed like a
shock; ~~Nothing could be more passive.~~ ~~Lea~~
She could almost fancy that the falsity the
frivolity the stucco would drop off ~~them~~
them as a But no. Nothing could be
more passive, than the faces; ~~under all the~~
~~nothing too~~ & all the hats were the same, all
the clothes; & the mouths opened; &
they seemed under a spell. drugged hypnotised

Kennedy

NYPL

then we are only ideas perhaps in somebody else's mind,
space was vast; the world only a pin point;
the gesticulating Oxford Street like ~~an~~ a mound of
ants; the binding gravity was it that stuck
them together; not love, not reason, but something
sticky & hot, a physical emanation; from
which they could not free themselves; only
now & again, in a head or two, a little light shone,
fitfully: as when she talked to Nicholas: as
when Maggie took her children down into the
kitchen that night, but that too was largely
unconscious, animal; some people had
little lights in their foreheads, fitfully emerging:
but for the most part they were all torpid,
bags for ~~cramming~~ that were stuffed & emptied
& so on, & like the simple blobs of jelly
one could see on a rock: reaching out for some
speck of food, gorging on it: But that is
not ~~true, she exclaimed~~; Bobby agreed like
that. And when she said, that she hated
human beings — when she said, with a little
thrill of emotion to Shelley standing in the window,
"I could not live in the country: people interest me
so" was she not only gratifying her own self
love: how far ~~would she go~~ could she
erect herself above her own habits & chains; the
secret comforts & complacencies of her life;
Could anyone, burrow so in the dark — did
they not all ask to be praised, & were
they not all merely the egotists that
Shelley had called Edward? — lovers of
power, coming down, with ridiculous

NYPL

take in even a few of the elements — she looked at the table —

over-emphatic gestures, saying This is right, I am right; when they were too petty, too self absorbed, to have any comprehension! Or was it too large, too vast a scatter of different objects? Who could even for a moment, in a moment of diffusion of ecstasy

The waitress ~~maid~~ slapped down her cheese

in front of her —

in one of those hard moments when the disguise of personality is destroyed — she had known them all & on — could they then grasp enough of the different things to comprehend the right way even for oneself, let alone another human being? I'm right I'm right I'm right — how they cried it called it down the streets — & how the mass of diners accepted passively their monstrous coercion: & suffered at the hands of some anonymous tyrant. Was it the newspaper? And her father had told her to keep a newspaper cutting. She had put the long crinkled strips into the Dutch cabinet. There was an inhuman spectre, dominating their lives: a thing that was not man or woman: How many different things there were to be seen. She looked at the table: at the silver vase, the electric lamps: at her gloves, at her bag, & then there was Kelly's orchid, & the cheap metal knives & forks.

long soft, plumed

What we must do, she said to Renny, is merely — she hesitated — to combine

NYPL

if we are all so different in fact – she looked at the old
combination on the table – then struck out into
But I dont care for these glib assumptions, my
dear Eleanor; why "one"? why this passion for
bring the love head on a Statue! I am myself: I
intend to be myself. That was the voice of Bobby.
She got up & took a shell from a vase on the
mantelpiece & lit her pipe.

But Bobby we are only half alive, she said.
Then she said, Dont you see, if we could live
properly. Then we should feel the fruit & the
orchid – only I'm talking nonsense. Yet
wasnt it nonsense? After all, there's Italy.
Elvira sent me a picture postcard with
cypresses & oxen. She had it in her bag.
She took it out & looked at the Italian road.
The oxen were standing with the great
leather flaps swinging under their chins;
& there were cypresses pointed behind them.
She sat, [illegible] [illegible], & thinking of the great
flat spaces of sunshine, the broad deep
shadow of the Italian street; the acrid smell in
the road; & the – she read what Elvira
had written on the other blank patch.
Frogs, nightingales: terraces: cypresses: cheese.
wine very cheap: too much marching long
walks: & home on Saturday, for money's run out."

Renny was squeezed up into the corner.

Yes, but that would require an infinite courage –
energy, she said to Nicholas: suppose we
lived, as you say, at with all our faculties;
what the common life might be; if it

NYPL

were free from fear & threats & bogeys, if it lived all over,
~~was~~ naked, adventuring, talking in the knops. The
orchid: All the tremendous invitation of the
world, its appeal, cries, barked from the mouths
of the frogs, from the roof orchid; & from other
heights: asking of these women here to give up
their submission their subservience; only it would
need a courage an audacity, a complete
loss of all the timid desires which men
felt so ardently: for praise & recognition,
for money, for power — it would need
heroism to live even one day as it should
be lived; & we are such very ordinary
people the majority looking at the diners-
acting, not living; falling in behind leaders —
or clear the ahead like gesticulating men,
who would only 'lead' on condition they
were given leather to put on their caps.
on condition they had followers. There were
scarcely a man alive, the majority,
thinking of the cabinet, & the writers of the
seventies, who has the force to live
independently of what is said, & of ...
money & love have stuck together in men's
lives. Whatever why I find the
poor, men & women who will never be
known, the obscure, the humble,
the only ones I can think of with pleasure
on the watching the night.

NYPL

"Why do we submit? she said, why do we go on living this sort of ~~slave life.~~ life, because some man, — the same company of men — the restaurant had branches all over London — forces us! And he makes a pile of money, & builds a red brick house in Surrey: but & perhaps he buys a paper; & so it goes on" she said.

Her peche Melba was delivered slopping about in its silver cup.

~~We submit,~~ ~~"Its not their fault" she said,~~

She looked at the couple who had been a course or two ahead of her: they were done: they were going — to some movie, presumably: the young man was paying the bill: the girl was setting her hat straight by her little mirror. They were still acting: she felt it ~~in the ostentation~~ something ostentatious in his manliness, — ~~perhaps~~ so Nicholas would never let her pay for him; & the girl was playing up too, with her little mirror.

And why must they do it?

"Because ~~they're so~~ there's so little real pleasure in their lives, I suppose" she thought. "So they imitate — so that go through the poses — which is what we ought to end" she said. "We ought to say these things don't matter:"

"Yes, but there it is again" she said, dipping her spoon into the old sweet mixture, we're all paid to keep things like this: How many people are there in this room, she thought, who have money enough to do what they like? ~~to think~~ or time to think?

Two business men had taken the place that the others had left. The waitress was again brushing off the crumbs, & tendering the splashed

NYPL

with their
hard bowler
hats,

card.

"It's a rotten system" she said, beckoning to the waitress.

It filled her with unreasonable disgust to think that these two worldly looking prosperous hard headed men were about to begin the meal all over again; hors d'oeuvres, fish, soup, fowl, chicken peche melba.

"Everywhere it's the same thing: we're ~~just~~ the people to blame: we say we run it for people's good: ~~but we~~ don't; we run it for our own good. The job's up.

What's the good of having a large tip? she thought, as she gathered her things together. I hate paying people to make them grateful. I ~~should like~~ to
she
And yet she thought as the waitress stood over her, totting ~~totting up~~ saying "Roll & butter... totting up the different items, what a queer [illegible] face that girl has. ~~Now~~ I wonder how long she's been on her feet" she thought. She walked out into Oxford Street & stood rather disconsolately, surveying its now mitigated splendour.

"It's always a mistake to dine out" she thought. Only an hour ago it had seemed dull going home to her flat & cooking her own dinner. But now how depressing the company of other men & women was!

NYPL

had depressed her.
That was another lie," she thought, "a sort of sham"
she referred, with acidity, to her own saying, when
she stood with Kitty looking ~~out~~ down on Grosvenor
Square, that she liked London, that people were so
interesting. "One swaddled oneself up in vague lies
she said. People interested her; running a committee,
having a scrap, getting power. We're all the same,
she thought; we all want something for ourselves,
fame, or money; we never do things for the
sake of things.
She passed a picture palace, as she walked on.
There was the same gaudy cheapness. the same
flaring invitation, the same drug. the same
desire behind it to trap the ~~tired~~ indifferent
work sodden people, & make money out of them
Common lust she thought would be better. But
then she thought how common lust, – the red faces
of the business men returned to her – disgusted her
two. Why, she still avoided certain streets at
night, she would avoid walking through Hyde
Park after dark alone, because she was afraid of
common lust. Men came out from behind
trees & followed one – even at her age. Then
the world was nothing but a jungle, men &
women remained beasts; veneered, covered over,
softened with pink light from cheap lamps:
She looked at the faces going in, out of the
light of the lamps. There was scarcely a
trace of humanity in them. she thought. When
they were not sodden & passive, the expression
was hard. rapacious, insolent. A band of
young men went by singing. A ~~so~~ rude
ugly sound came from the lips, defiant, and as they
unfriendly, coarse, stupid.

NYPL

were pulling down a building, she saw a crazy line of scaffolding against the sky, & seemed to her for a moment that as if there were something crazy wrong, tumbling & wreckage in the whole of the world now. She had heard people say over & over again that civilisation was crashing: after the war after the peace, there were nothing but downfalls & ruin: And for a moment the angles of the scaffolding & the bestial song of the half drunk young men seemed to her terrifying. as if there were no order in the world; as if they were all falling into ruin, beneath a perfectly indifferent moon.

19th March 1934

NYPL

May 10th 1934

Part. Seven

A voice pealed out across the dirty little street.
George Pargiter, steering his car round the corner,
stopped under the window from which the voice came, to
look at the name of the street: It could hardly be
here, he thought, that his cousin lived, here in this
draggled looking street. But Elvira had given him
the name — yes, it was right; & the number. So
then it must be ~~the house opposite; He~~ on the
opposite side. He turned with difficulty, the
street was narrow, & ~~women were standing~~ people
~~stretched across~~ & stopped in the middle, ~~indifferent to~~
~~his hooting~~ Twenty five, twenty three, twenty
one he counted, & stopped & got out. A
strip of metal upon which people punch their
names in auto ~~Tube stations~~ bore the words E. Pargiter.
He went up the ~~dirty~~ stairs of what had been
once a fine house; slowly, haltingly, ~~wiser saw~~
disparagingly. ~~uncertain which door to knock.~~
& ~~stop~~ halted on the landing uncertain which
door to knock. From across the road came the
voice of the singer, laboriously ascending the scale &
~~stopping~~ making a prolonged stop here, & then there:
& then, he heard, a sudden burst of laughter from
the ~~door~~ behind the door. He would have
known the voice anywhere. It was Elvira's.
He went in, expecting to find her in with somebody.
But she was kneeling on the floor ~~with~~ at the
telephone ~~in her hand~~ laughing.
She did not move, but held up her hand as he
came in, because she was listening. This
sitting had made her lose some words.
"I cant hear — ~~I cant hear~~" she said, irritably
& waved to him to sit, & be silent. She knelt listening:
~~she kneeling no, "she said,~~
& as she listened, her ~~expression~~ face took on

stopped in the middle of the street indifferent to his hooting

in automatic machines.

NYPL

her rapt look; ~~of~~ so that George, watching her, felt
that she was only half aware of him: What was it about
he wondered; awkwardly, feeling an intruder, piecing
together the ~~different~~ unintelligible words; & as he did so,
he looked round him. An untidy room, with
flowers on the mantelpiece; silhouettes of
a ~~man in a~~ two old fashioned people,
& books on the floor; ... Then he heard her say,
looking at him & smiling as she spoke, "Yes, that's
right. He's sitting here.) He's not really much changed—
I met him ~~the other~~ day. & I ~~used to know~~ asked him
to ~~dinner~~. And I've always liked him. ~~Different as~~
we are, I've always felt with George, underneath
an appearance of staggering respectability. he
has the elements of an honest man.— Yes. A
Good fellow, as you might say George Pagiter,
Morris's son; went to the war; covered himself
shall we say with glory?— &
~~He too~~, & He clothed her.
Now he asks, who am I speaking to? But I
prefer to keep ~~that a mystery~~." Shall I
introduce you? But you would have
nothing in common. Just as when one goes
into a cave, ~~in~~ carrying a little candle,
all you would see would be, a sheer slab of
brown rock; ~~but~~ ~~brown rock~~" she repeated
looking at him: ~~but some~~ of brown rock:
whereas I, to whom daylight: sparkling....
good bye" she ended abruptly. & replaced
the receiver.

who have seen
the cave
flooded
with—

And then people say life is simple" she said,
springing to her feet. When, she took his hand,
& held it affectionately, here am I
living down in Shropshire: you I could hear
the birds in the garden: here in this room; &
also, when you come in, what was
hollow enough in itself, what was wild & strange

NYPL

& indeed almost incredible, ~~became~~ had to combine itself
with the presence of . . . well, now I hold your hand,
I realise — now we will sit down," she drew the
chairs together: "Yes, its an odd thing, telephoning."
"But you did say to-day?" he enquired.
"I did," she confirmed him. "I said today. I said Tuesday."
"But its Wednesday" he corrected her. "Yes. Yes, its
Wednesday. How should I forget that?" she added,
~~Look seems lock on the mantelpiece~~
"May ~~I take to~~ where ~~shall~~ I put my hat?" he asked.
"On the bookcase ~~or~~ on the table ~~stand further if you like~~" she replied.
"This is a queer ~~little~~ ~~room~~ little — a queer room —" he began.
"Yes. Poverty stricken isn't it?" she replied.
~~But no bags~~. ~~Not too~~.
"You always minded that sort of thing" he said,
seating heavily: the chair was rocky with springs.
"Well —" she said. They were silent.

Agshom,

They were the best of their cousins: so that
He too liked her the best; he had wanted to come &
see her alone. when they met, casually, he had met, again, here, ~~for~~ ~~that~~
Yet when they met, nothing to say, ~~great~~
& could talk, there was nothing; had frightened him
her telephoning & ~~her laughter~~ had frightened him, to which
superficially: & the poverty of the room, was not used,
he, as a bachelor, of means, as because it impressed him: &
also made him shy,
Yet he could not ~~ask her~~ reach her, altogether,
why do you live in this drab disreputable way,
"~~I had~~ It took me an age to get here." he said
~~First~~ I've been all over the place, looking for you.
Because you imagined that I lived in a house,
very rich window curtains, a brass knocker.
~~Elvi~~ My cousin, you said to yourself, — must
my word, how well you're dressed — must
have a maid. All Pargiters have maids you said.
Crosby. Do you remember Eleanor's Crosby?"

NYPL

Eleanor's Crosby? He replied. Oh but she's pensioned off"
he said "Crosspatch we used to call her" he added.
~~But Eleanor~~" Well, ~~there's~~ talking about Eleanor"
said Elvira: I was dreaming about her. D'you ever see her!"
Last night as a matter of fact" said George. "She had a
party — no, there was one other man — a foreigner
"~~Nicholas~~?"
He tried to describe him for he had not caught his
surname. dark, rather
Well Eleanor & he talked: we talked about serious things.
intelligent; I mean
For instance politics"
of all frivolous things, said Elvira.
of all frivolous things said ~~S~~

Eleanor's Crosby" he replied. Oh but she's
pensioned off? Crosspatch we used to
call her, he added. I was dreaming about her,
d'you ever see her?
Last night as a matter of fact, said George. She
had a party — no, there was one other man —
He tried to describe him: dark, rather
intelligent., I mean, he said we talked about
serious things. For instance, politics."
Frivolous things" said Elvira: Of all frivolous
things, I think, to me —
Yes, of all frivolous things, to me, politics
She was certain that nobody could
wish, in her presence, to talk about the
dreariest of all subjects, that is the
present condition of Europe. Yet they
all did it — Nicholas, Eleanor —
all of them. The knowledge saddened
her. She thought the centre of interest
lay in discussing affairs that were nearer
to the heart, subtler, & more difficult of

NYPL

"But who were you telephoning to?" he said,
looking for somewhere to put down his hat.
"On the table, on the bed, ~~on the bo~~ anywhere"
she replied to his gesture. He put his hat with a
smile on a broken plaster cast.
"Yes. In the devil's own mess, isn't it?" she
said,
But that's the sort of thing you don't mind" he said,
seating himself. The chair was rocky with
exposed springs.
"No" she said indifferently. They were silent.
He ~~two~~ wondered to whom she had said that. He liked
him the better for them: it was true, they too he
thought, remembering her phrase about the
grey, no the brown slab of rock. They gave him a
feeling of freedom; he looked down at his
~~patent~~ "evening shoes: then at her.
She was crumpled, untidy, perhaps because
she had something wrong with her back.
She perched rather than sitting in a chair like
anybody else.
"I had the devil of a time finding you" he said.
"In this slum" she replied. "You imagined
I lived in a house, she added, with muslin
blinds. a brass knocker. 'My cousin
you said to yourself" she looked at him —
my word how well you're dressed, she added —
must have a maid. + All Pargiters
have maids, you said to yourself, looking
up & down the street, thinking of
Eleanor's Crosby. Crosspatch we used to
call her. 'Is Miss Eleanor in?' one
used to say. & she joggled at one, like a
fish, coming up to the glass, in the
aquarium."

NYPL

a dark lake
with antelopes —
she waved her
hand —

George's very
strong in her,

The ~~sound of that~~
voice ~~singing~~
mounted
another step.

The sound of the voice singing its one note & then ~~ass~~
ascending to the next came in through the open window.
"I dined with her — Eleanor — last night" he said
No Crosby. A foreigner, Nicholas something or other.
And ~~for~~ talked politics" ? Elvira added.
"Dear old Eleanor, yes" said George.
"But after all, said Elvira, put Eleanor on the
verge of the most romantic shore in the whole world, —
& she'd be feeling in her pocket for a
lump of sugar to feed the
the pike?" he suggested. ~~The desire to help;~~
Yes that's very strong in her: the desire — he hesitated
"~~Put her in a crowd, & instead of feeling as we do,~~
"To give & ~~give~~ & give. But what can you
give I say to her. ~~But the [illegible] Eleanor~~
~~[illegible] naturally bountifully;~~ ~~Did she~~
~~Ever love~~, d'you think?
"What about Nicholas?" he said abruptly. She stretched
"Ah, Nicholas" said Elvira. her eyes
out & laid her hands across
"Look here, George, she said, there's ~~any~~ a number
of things to talk about; being as we are, related."
Are those our ~~grandparents~~ ancestors, he asked, looking
at the black silhouettes on the mantelpiece.
"Those black shades" she said Yes.
I can say "Cousin" to you; & what I
~~Couldn't to, say~~, for this instinct of
concealment; what I am I will not tell,
~~I will leave it to you to guess;~~
what I am I will conceal; ~~that's~~ all
~~nonsense~~; surely, blood in common. Cousins in
common, I mean, I will tell you frankly
I loved him once, yes: we loved each other,
Nicholas & I, very much: but always,
let me see how can I describe it to you! What

NYPL

38

scene can I choose? How can I tell the story of what
happened between us? Only that he wanted to possess me.
He would come up for example on a windy day,
when the ~~[illegible]~~ laburnums & the lilacs were
tossing themselves, leaving a scatter of ~~[illegible]~~ yellow
petals on the grass (this is at Bamcote — we
~~lived a~~ spent a summer there) And I would
say she raised her lip, to act the part;
Now we spend the whole day walking ~~on~~ in the
fields. Whereupon he says, standing before me
with his great hands clenched on the top of a
stick he bought in Sweden — to me there was
something symbolical in his action at
that time; he would say "No. Eleanor No. having
perhaps missed a letter, or not had one — I might
have forgotten to write, or posted it in one of
those letter boxes in the country ~~where no one~~
which aren't emptied. First you shall explain
he would say to me, your conduct. As if
were there; I in one place, & nothing but one
person." And then he said Eleanor, a
woman," She stopped.
Love's the devil isn't it." he said briefly.
A tear had slid down her cheek.
And ~~now I go on with the~~ then story" she said.
as if she were going on with the story, "the
I dislike that method, the clenched hands, the
stick, — & one thing coming after another, to
separate us; you remember the helter skelter-
of the war, George: & ~~how~~ I resolved —
~~Go, I said,~~ I said to myself, — suddenly she
looked at her cousin, laughed. "Pray,
you're dressed" she said. a white waistcoat;
she said. parties you didn't expect a
dinner party did you?" she asked.
People? people dining here" She looked
round the room. "A table laid with
wine glasses; so on?" she asked.

NYPL

"Dear Eleanor!" she repeated. "Then you talked of the sorrows of the world. And who was with her — Nicholas?"
"Yes" he said. He remembered how, during the war, he had heard that Nicholas & Elvira were engaged.
"~~And~~ Yes you talked of the sorrows of the world" he repeated. "Dear old Eleanor."
"Put her on the throne of the most romantic lake in the world" said Elvira, "where the antelopes come to drink" — she waved her hand. George smiled. ~~It was a~~ queer untidy world that his cousin lived in, he thought. She was an odd fish, Elvira: grown no older, better looking perhaps, & always talking; talking.

"& she'd be feeling in her pocket for a lump of sugar" Elvira added. ~~George's very strange to~~ her.
But say to her, ~~But~~ my dear Eleanor what can you give people? Yes, & Nicholas was there" she added; "& after dinner when ~~we were~~ ~~you~~ humble kind — but we'd all come down in the world — you drew your chairs round, & you talked —"
"~~About the sorrows of the world~~" said George. ~~Whether there'll be a revolution.~~ What a damned mess everything's in: whether there'll be a revolution."

He leant forward, in her creaking chair, wrinkling his forehead.

"That's — what we said" he added, "what everybody's saying. Lord ~~What a mess we've made of it.~~"
D'you remember my coming to see down to somewhere on the other side of the river —
"To say goodbye before you went to the war" said Elvira. ~~Yes~~.
Yes. They were silent.
The voice of the woman mounting the scale came in through the open window.
~~Wick, the woman over, said Elvira~~

NYPL

8

40

There's a number of things we can talk about, being related," she said

"Are those our ancestors?" he asked nodding his head at the black silhouettes on the mantelpiece.

"Those black shades" she said "are Grandfather & Great grandfather. So that I can say to you for example "Crosspatch"; or why the devil did you do it George — meaning: ~~Gies~~ hoop la! when you went down the stairs that night, the tears stood in my eyes. And then I said ridiculous, contemptible, whimsical, conventional: & then we sat in the cellar & the guns popped over our heads. ~~what a war! what a mean~~ Yes — why did you do it?"

I enjoyed it" he said doggedly. Yes I did. "he added. "Except for the Bella than this asylum." Jelly.

"You're ~~extremely~~ aren't you smart!" she said looking at him. ~~Rooster~~ — A white waistcoat for the first time. Jelly. And yet, no ~~dress suit~~ d'you know what you remind me of? A picture. ~~the~~ ~~of a young man~~ who is the young Frenchman, with round eyes, & an honest face, whose puzzled: who has a tall hat; who has just thrown himself in a chair to be looked at! You know what I mean! The picture of an honest man, 1801, or thereabouts."

"Not the shortest notion" he said, shaking his head. Of course I dressed. ~~I said~~ I'd come because of the party." "It is Wednesday isn't it?" he added. She had made no preparations. Perhaps he had mistaken the day. Other party?

Elvira continued, "He sits there in her chair, ~~a very interesting young man~~ & puzzled contemplating with humour, with sad eyes...

~~He got up & went into the little room~~

There had now added through the noise in

There comes back
and Maggie
to attach further
children.

& the clerk:

NYPL

the street the sound of a horn or trombone.
The voice & the horn seemed to be struggling ~~for~~
together: one valiantly mounted the scale; the other
melodiously mourned. Like two people expressing
different versions of belief.
Elvira laughed.
"Soon the barrel organ 'll start" she said; "&
then the loudspeaker ~~in the~~ on the top floor will
say, ~~I am now talking to you over to~~ . . . "

The weather forecast for tomorrow"

She lay back ~~listening~~ as if she were waiting for
the different ~~elements, to~~ sounds:
"That's a milk ~~big~~ van" she ~~said~~ noted, as a
as ~~the~~ a great lorry passed:
~~Great rattling & shook~~
the house shook.
"Don't you find this part of the world rather noisy!
Does it always go on like this!"
George said.
"~~[illegible]~~ It's nothing to a hot summer's night, when the
children are playing in the street" said Elvira.
"There!" a shrill cry ~~sent~~ pealed out under the
window. A woman ~~bawled~~ shouted, ~~out of the win~~
alarmed for her child's safety.
"And then when the public house is shut.—
they come streaming back" she added. Or, she acts
the shelter raging: but
let me in. let me in. She suppose she spent the night
he wouldn't let her in
out"
I should find it too sordid" he said, ~~listening~~.
~~He~~ They listened for a time, but the sounds
died down. Only the voice of the woman
practising continued. The trombone player
had moved further down the street.
"And so you didn't mind whether the
~~toes of the~~ head off, & finding bloody hands?—"
She turned on him suddenly.
"Well after all, what choice was there?" he
asked. "You couldn't let other people do
it at home safely.

NYPL

42

May 24

~~[illegible]~~. I'll see about the dinner" she said, getting up.
"That young man, I said to Nicholas, the night ~~[illegible]~~
you went, regarding through my lens the gilt head
of the rabbit on the soup tureen, went through
Every phase quite visibly."
~~Maggie~~ ah — ~~if you'd had a woman stick a~~
white feather in your coat — "
He took up the book that was dropped on the floor
& turned over the pages while she lit the gas
ring in the kitchen.
Ugh all Elvira, he said, as she came back,
if you'd had a woman stick a white feather in your
coat —. He ~~dropped~~ shut the book & put it
neatly on the table.
But my dear John, she said, — that's a very
interesting book, she threw in, ~~d'you know it~~! — the man
found a different ~~kind of lizard from whatever's~~
been ~~known~~ before — I was saying, aren't ~~I~~ we all
afraid! ~~And what do I do about it?~~ ~~Acid~~ That's good for ~~the~~ soul.
For one reason or another yes. ~~that what's bad for the soul,~~
Nicholas ~~would tell~~ you ~~that~~ ~~afraid of what people~~
~~Why do we live like~~ this, she tapped another book,
well say? That man, — let me see what does he
Chesterton me. ~~Go to~~ He says, — He says,
say? She shuffled the pages. He says, in the
A woman is not fit to eat, he says, ~~in his white feather,~~
same room with ourselves: ~~That's~~ ~~But I say to~~
~~which he sticks in my coat.~~
~~hair,~~ Do I push at you my temper in the
public streets, wrote a letter near —" she laughed,
Now angry, posturing attitudinising little
radish in breeches. No: Yet here:
Dinner'll be ready in half an hour:"
She laughed. ~~What about~~ That's ~~for~~ a white
feather! Let 'em stick that feather in our
button hole. I say. ~~poor little fools~~ Let 'em
stick": Let 'em stick:

I say; let 'em stick

NYPL

Part Seven.

A voice pealed out across the dusty little street —
the voice of a woman singing scales.
John Pargiter stopped his car under the window,
uncertain whether to go on, or turn back. & Elvira had
Milton Street, Milton Street he read; yes: & Elvira had
said Twenty one; this was forty four. So that he
must turn his car. But what a dusty sordid
little street for her to live in! ~~a~~ dusty
sordid, disreputable — a woman coming from a
public house with a mug of beer in her hand,
decided the adjective, — which he chose as he
backed & turned. Twenty nine, twenty
five, twenty three he counted, & got out;
& locked his car. He looked at the door.
Names mounted over each other: Foster,
Abrahamson; Roberts; E Pargiter — that was ~~[illegible]~~
punched out on a strip of metal such as
you buy in automatic machines. The door was
open. He pushed through & went up the stairs
of what had been, perhaps a hundred years before,
a gentleman's residence; he mounted slowly,
tentatively, ~~[illegible]~~ & stood on the landing
uncertain which door to knock.
From across the road came the voice of the singer
laboriously ascending the scale, making a
prolonged stop, here, there, as if the notes were
a stair upon which she rested ~~her~~ ~~con~~ a
~~full~~, her opulent indolent body. Suddenly a
voice ~~pealed out~~ laughed from behind the door.
It was Elvira's voice; she must be talking to
somebody. He ~~h~~ straightened himself; to find her
& paused a moment; for he had expected
alone, but she must have somebody there
"I can hear the birds singing in the garden" he

NYPL

44

she was saying as he opened the door. She was alone
Kneeling on the floor. She was talking into the telephone.
She did not move, but held her hand up, as he came in,
as if the noise he made were causing her to lose
some words.

"I can't hear" she said signing to him to be quiet.
She returned to the telephone.

Yes she said, Yes I can hear ~~now~~:"
As she listened her face took on a rapt look;
shades of amusement passed over it; only her
right hand & the glance she gave him now &
then, as she listened, indicated that she knew
that he was there; that ~~she~~ the sense of his presence
mingled with what she was saying.

Oh yes my dear John, she said, ~~taking~~ opening her
arms: & taking his hand in hers.

But who were you telephoning to Eleanor?" he
asked.

Who was I describing you to?" she said, Well
somebody ~~whose room~~
somebody you've never seen; somebody
who has Opens into a garden; so that as I talked,
I could hear, all those miles away, a bird in a garden.
~~Yes, it's fine down there;~~ on top of some pyramid -
I could hear birds singing. So I said to him,
The birds are singing: whereupon you came in,
& he at once knew from the sound of my voice:

She had taken her hat & held it as if uncertain
where to put it.

The room ~~was~~ ~~untidy John noticed.~~ there's no end to the
So ~~there's no bed~~
complication" she said.

Now, she put her hat on the top of a tall
chest of drawers, & sat down.

I had the deuce of a time finding you" said
John sitting down too. The springs of the chair

NYPL

rose rather rockily beneath him.
"Were you thinking of ~~the~~ the reach?" she said reaching him
the cigarettes. "Were you looking for modern Curtain,
bran Knocker—?"
He smiled; it ~~had~~ never struck him to associate
her with ~~bran Knocker~~ as he looked at her.
Perhaps because there was something wrong with her
back, she perched, rather than sat in a chair, like
other people: The voice of the woman mounting
the scale came in through the open window.
"You ~~did~~ expected me; didn't this Wednesday?" he said
She ~~[illegible]~~ gave him one.
looking for a match. She glanced at him:
As ~~she~~ he lit it she glanced at him:
"My word, you're dressed" she said. Her eyes
rested on the white shirt under his coat.
Who, the young Frenchman with round eyes, & a pointed hat,
& ~~has reminded~~ ~~of spectacles~~ what's ~~the~~ picture you
remind me of?" she asked. "He has spectacles—"
"Not the sharing of a notion" he said
It was a little uncomfortable, under her eyes, as she
likened him to a picture; & began to ~~light his~~
take off her overcoat. "I ~~dressed~~ thought I had to
"~~The seventeenth~~. Dehai-
dren. For the party" he said. throwing his coat over the chair.
pantly he said,
She sits there with her hat on her knee, said Eleven-
—no I can't remember." She felt silent, as if suggests that
~~They sat silent~~ of the picture
"~~Don't you find~~ ?" he began; a
Don't you find it noisy — someone ~~was playing~~ had begun to play a horn, or a
trombone in the street below. The sound of the
horn tootling out its ~~melancholy~~ ~~be~~ ~~sad~~ old tune, & the
woman practising scales, seemed to be struggling against each other; one
valiantly mounting up & up, the other
melodiously looting, like two people
saying completely different things at the same

She was crumpled; untidy. Yet better looking than [illegible] he hoped.

in the picture.

NYPL

46

moment.
"Listen to them, listen to them;" Elvira laughed.
Soon there'll be the barrel organ" she said —
She lay back as if waiting for another sound to
break in. And then the loud speaker —
A great lorry crashed down the street, drowning
both voices in her [illegible], making the house
shake.
"But it's rather noisy," said John looking round him.
He observed the flowers trembling in the jar, as the
lorry passed. But it's rather noisy.
"Nothing to a hot summer night when the
children are all playing in the street" said Elvira.
And last night, she added, there was a woman
singing, Let me in let me in!"
They sat listening.
He too decided he said.
The trombone player, had moved further down the
street. Only the woman's voice,
Are there any ancestors' he said, looking at the black
~~He~~ silhouettes on the mantelpiece.
"Those black shades; ~~grand father~~" "St
I was dining with Eleanor last night" he said,
to break the silence.

As Loti
[illegible]

Elvira sound hardly.
And what did you talk about? she said
~~He~~ everything — everything under the sun" he replied.
There was a fellow there, a foreigner: a
chap called — he hesitated. He had
heard, during the war, that Nicholas & Elvira
were engaged, or something of the sort.
"~~Nicholas" said Elvira~~ ~~the someone of the~~
~~[illegible]~~? Yes, she said, as if she had guessed
his thought; that man Nicholas was
there, & let me see — when you had
dined, you drew your chair round, & you
talked — she smiled.

NYPL

~~look~~? ~~he~~ said, 'I'm ~~very fond~~ of her.' he said
I like her. She the best of that generation. You can talk
to Eleanor" he added. "~~In fact,~~ ~~But~~ she's
~~got~~ muddled— ~~bothered. She talks~~ but she
doesn't ~~lay down the law~~— she's—
Yes: ~~she~~ Eleanor looks into the dogs bowl of water, she
says to Crosby, I think I've layed hands on that at
last. The sloper on the landing. Everybodies
fast asleep. From behind the door come ~~the~~
~~sounds of~~ little sounds— ~~moans~~: stifled cries;
her old father ~~thrust~~ tossing in his sleep as he
~~thinks over~~ repents him of his villainies—
~~What are you talking about Elvira?~~ he laughed.
~~Well. She~~ But was our uncle! did he? & John again.
His eye glanced at the black silhouettes on
the mantelpiece. Well she goes
well naturally, said Elvira. And did you
jumbling from this to that,
observe her bag last night John?
Stuffed with the queerest odds & ends!
Let me see ~~your bag~~, I say to Eleanor,
& undoing the ~~to~~ catch of that wallet,
I sometimes have spread— the sat up, in
made of little movement an of the were
arranged, different objects round her. What's in it.
& pin, cant think John, what a life she's
lived: There're the bus tickets, the tram tickets:
~~A mystic ... a letter, & always~~, that little
there maybe a letter. Then one of those to whom
the sorrows of the world"— she broke off
leaving the quotation, if it were one, unfinished.
We said what a damned mess Everythings in" said
John. But you're an odd fish" he
added. I mean, the way things together in peoples
bags: & what you said about em:"

Our life what is our life.

My father— why did he keep a mistress!

What goes into her bag.

NYPL

He looked at her affectionately

The last time we met, she said, —
nine, ten. eleven years ago was it —
[illegible] when I was leaving for the front —
D'you remember my coming to see you, somewhere on
the other side of the river?
The voices sounded: the trombone. the
woman singing. Suddenly there was a cry.
A woman shouted, angrily, anxious for the safety
of her child.
"That's the sound I mean" she said. "That's what
goes on all the time on a hot summer night:"
"This isn't the room where I came to see you
in the war isn't it?" he said looking round.
"No." "That was on the other side of the river."
It was a room like this though —"
D'you remember?" side she was — "Every night she goes
That was on the other "I remember — yes." she replied.
on like that — she broke off impatiently —
imitating the singer, Oh ah — ah. ah oh oh —"
And one of these days she'll burst into the glory of
Completed song!" "Yes. But why did you ~~don't~~ —
why Did you —" she looked sideways at him lovingly;
who reminded her of the young Frenchman in the
picture: she thought he had changed somehow:
Did you enjoy shooting peoples heads off —
bloody hands — ?"
He A shrugged his shoulders.
Don't let's talk about the war.
Everybody did it" he said. Anyhow [illegible]
better than ~~this~~ [illegible] I dined with Eleanor
last night" he broke off. She's getting a bit
older, like most people.
You talked about everything under the sun"
Eleanor with her bag full of odds & ends. said

NYPL

I suppose." said Elvira. "There! That's begun now."
A trombone player had struck up in the street below.
The voice practising scales and went on
valiantly mounting the stairs; the other melodiously
moaned; they sounded like two people,
saying different things at the same moment.
Elvira laughed. ~~It~~ George laughed.
"You've chosen a noisy street" I must say" he said.

"Dear

"Johnny's pop-guns" said Elvira indifferently.
"We've all come down in the world. ~~And~~ Mama's
old soup plates. Yes" she recollected, "that was
the night you left me. Now ~~there~~ they're all broken.

all broken —

I went on to dine with Maggie ~~that night~~" she
explained; "& there was a man there, a friend of theirs,
Nicholas, she said; "& we sat in a cellar, & he said —
she laughed — he gave us a lecture upon the soul"
"That's the chap I met last night" George interrupted.
"We sat in the cellar, Elvira continued;
"How odd Eleanor looked, ~~sitting~~ in a
blue dressing gown: sitting on an avalanche of coal; cob webs:
& when the guns exploded (there was a raid
tonight) one of these cob webs just floated up &
down like that" She waved her hand.

& there was a raid, & we sat in the cellar

"I suppose ~~that~~ that seemed to you highly ridi-culous" he
said rather bitterly
And then we went upstairs & sat in the drawing
room ~~in a~~ Nicholas — ~~that was~~ the chap I met at Eleanor's last
night" he interrupted. "A foreigner, very
talkative — "holds his hands out like this" said
Elvira: . She held her hand out —
he gave ~~us~~ his well known lecture on the
soul." She laughed. She imitated him.

NYPL

"My dear Eleanor, he said, the soul is now in its
infancy; the soul grows by threading in rings:
we know nothing about ourselves yet" he said;
~~he~~ it has to expand, to grow, like this, like this
he said — And in those days, ten years ago,
Can it be ten years ago?" George exclaimed
Well yes" he added. It was 1927 —
ten years ago, my friend Nicholas, always when he
talked, came to a point where he hadn't any
words. ~~Nicholas~~ It has sat like this" She sat up,
~~her~~ she wrinkled her forehead; she laughed;
George laughed: she opened & shut her mouth like a
fish gasping for air; he shook his head like
this" she shook her head. "There aren't
any words" he said. And by Jove, George,
she wound up, turning on him, as if she were a
~~young~~ man of about his age, he was
perfectly right." Ah oh, oh ah, ah oh"
she sank back in her chair, imitating the
voice of the woman practising scales.

And then he found words. Why. Because it pays"

After the war, George had gone to the East. He had
had been abroad a great deal. They had scarcely
met during the ten years that had passed
since the end of the war. They tried to
span across the abyss from the threads left
when he had said goodbye to her in her room.

But that was ten years ago," she said.
But as long as all that! said George. He
~~made a~~ calculated — he had said goodbye
to Eleanor in 1917: it was now 1927:
Yes you're right " he said
And now he's found words" said Eleanor.
It pays" she said bitterly.

NYPL

What

& telling them
what's right.

or at nights in
summer — why
Nichol took a
boat! D'you see!

Or a summer day at
Kew — the river.
A place called
Bamcote down
in
Oxfordshire.

"He talks enough now" said George. He held forth to a
whole room full of people — all sorts of people:
"It pays" she replied bitterly.
~~Talking~~ pays! said George.
"~~You~~ ~~goes~~ go about in a tail coat & spats" she said,
& ~~you~~ get people to ~~pay~~ listen to you. Ten & six in
the front row: the cheaper seats are at the back
where you don't hear so well. but still you can see
Nicholas gesticulating."
But Elvira, George began. He had heard that they were
engaged. — "I thought he was a friend of yours."
"~~Yes~~ I love him" she said. "~~O you remember the~~ In that
room ~~I~~ had over the river," she added: "He'd come
at home of the day & night. He was working in a
hospital."
~~The~~ ~~Yes~~? ~~George~~ Had they quarrelled. George wondered.
And ~~well~~ then of course, he has his mother to support;
a husband was a brother — I forget; at any rate
the thing that has to grow, that has to expand, in
~~obscurity~~; that has to always to adventure, fear nothing, ~~his voice~~ gain —
change ~~the flying out~~ ~~unshaking~~
fearing nothing; become — well what d'you
think he asks for a seat in the front row?
Ten & sixpence. It's true you can get in by
paying half a crown: but then you don't hear so
well: you only catch half the message of the
master the teacher." Crumbs from the feast:
fragments from the table."
The door opened, & a girl pushed in awkwardly
& because she was carrying a tray. She began to
lay the table; jingling knives & glasses.
~~Well we're all in~~

We're all in the same boat" said George.
He had liked the
"We have to live."

NYPL

liked the foreigner at Eleanor's.
we have to live" he repeated. ~~As~~ the maid kept coming
in & out of the room — a staring red-cheeked girl
who looked as if she were shut up stairs, against
her will by some force lower down in the house;
so that she burst into the room always with
the same gaping expression of surprise on her face,
he lot ~~described how~~ as if she were too bewildered
to find herself there to do more than dump
plates on the table. To shut the door was
beyond her. Conversation was very difficult.
He picked up a book that had fallen on the floor
& put it on the table. He looked at the
silhouettes on the wall.

"And Eleanor said" ~~sai~~ Elvira began.
(last night I mean) Eleanor said, But we
ought to decide what we want. And she
told you a little story about her youth, in
the big house they had somewhere in a very
respectable neighbourhood; the place they hated so.
Delia, she continued, said to me the other day,
if she has to go to Paddington, she always makes a
circuit to avoid that house. Oh the drawing
room, she says, — the drawing room on a winter
evening! Well its for us, says Eleanor, to
see that the world's better for those that come
after us." Was that it?"
Yes. ~~They did talk a little about~~ the past"
said George. ~~My father was there~~
~~More or less~~ That's it more or less."
Now I must wash" she said. & got up & left him.
He ~~[illegible]~~ you stood by the window, in order not to
embarrass the maid; who was laying the table.
~~A seen~~ The sun must have been setting somewhere,

NYPL

for a large house at the corner blushed a rosy pink.
High up, a window ~~a tiny [illegible] gold in the~~
flashed gold. Giant ~~a~~ the far away background
~~that~~ of ~~[illegible]~~ wheels turning. Gears changing, heavy
vehicles stopping & starting on again; ~~he hear~~
Closer you now & then a voice crying vegetables: a
man bawling as he trundled his barrow slowly
along the lower streets. Far away a barrel
organ was playing; the tune ceased, & sprang up
again, rather louder, rather closer.
Oppressed, & yet vaguely excited — he had been out of
England so long — he turned from the window. — Idly he
sat down waiting for Elvira to return.
read a newspaper cutting that lay crumpled up
on the table beside the chair. It was an
account of some fashionable wedding; ~~at~~
just came the last; Mr. James Blake Otway
had married the Hon. ~~Ella~~
the names of the bride & bride groom: then the
guests, in order of social precedence. He scanned
them idly, wondering if they were friends of
Elvira's, — relations — Perhaps he would find
a cousin's name, or an Aunt's name, among them.
He was reading when she came back.
The door was shut; the table was laid.
The girl had been sucked down into the
lower part of the house again:
He laid it down; What's this — he began,
asking her.
When you came in, I was telephoning,' she said
What do you think I was saying?'
No — dinner won't be ready yet.
I wanted to know, & you wouldn't tell me, he said
My dear George, I was saying something very
important: Come to think of it the most
important thing I've ever said in my life ....

Now we have to wait the raid.

NYPL

He had only come back to England quite lately.
It still seemed to him an extraordinary place:
the talk, the excitement, the perpetual rubbing together
of different people still puzzled excited & interested
him. She had been right when she said he
was puzzled: like the Frenchman in the picture.
~~And did you enjoy~~ They tried to throw across
the abyss with the threads that had been left
when he slammed the door, ten years ago, & left
her. She had cried he remembered.
"And did you enjoy it" she said.— "
shooting peoples heads off?" He noticed
how she still drew her lips up like a horse
that is going to bite.
"Oh the war— that's over" he sighed. He shrugged
his shoulders. "I was dining with Eleanor
last night." he broke off, as if to change the
conversation.
"She's not a day older"
"No she gets steadily younger". Did she tell you— she
laughed, how, when she came downstairs,
a week ago then— what was it I forget—
she looked into the dog's bowl of water; &
suddenly saw, ~~I forget what~~ 'the meaning of life.'
There was a foreigner there; who talked a lot." said
George.
Yes, yes & a
They listened for a moment to the ~~voi~~ voice.
Well anyhow it's awfully interesting" he said.
He meant, coming back to England, talking;
theories; clever people talking.
Yes. she said

NYPL

He ~~Sneer had become bitter.~~
You went away for ten years, & then you came back
& Everybody was paired off; settled; Everybody
had settled into his own way of life: nobody
had any time or attention to give: He felt
Extraordinarily lonely, though so excited. He
felt a wish to belittle, to sneer, to ask what
have they done of everybody he met? And
when they had done something creditable, to
belittle it. One of his brothers was a
partner. One of his sisters was a married & had
children. & so on. Nobody had time to
spend the day as he had then: He had to
control his instinct to say. So you're all going on
Still in the same old way?

She came in. It was difficult to form any
attachment, to get in touch. People hinted
at ~~this~~ something. They left their sentences unfinished.
They ~~answered~~ ~~Exam~~ Every thing they said, ~~the~~ I meant
Just answer the telephone. And yet he was
impressed by the new galleries, new shops, new
homes, new machinery of all kinds; & to
it was exciting, after seeing only black men, to
meet windbags; or ~~silent~~ merchants, like
Pickersgill: ~~He seemed to have~~ a finger in
~~Every pie~~: who, meeting the Prime Minister in
St James Park — That must have been
a Mr. George concluded; a tall story: yet
it had impressed him;

Love h.

She looked up & there was Elvira. Why did
one smile at the sight of her? Not because she was
crooked: but because, when ever she left the
room she
whenever she came back into the room she
had thought of something that she wished to
say. ~~She had~~ Another touch to be added.

NYPL

Talking started her off; at once she formed
like a boy blowing bubbles: all the world only her
pipe in her mouth; & when she came back – look,
it was all bubbling, dubbling. Even little bits
of soapy water, he said to himself ironically,
~~for she~~ as her lips moved; yes
~~What~~ I was thinking she began, at once,
what must seem strange to George; coming back from
the East: ~~I~~ wouldn't be ~~merely~~ that they've pulled
down one of the big streets: ~~no: he would~~
~~think~~ it ~~would be~~ this – when I come in, he
would say to himself, 'I find Elvira on her
knees at the telephone. Part of her in Shropshire:
part here: whom is she talking to? And
then you make an effort, an heroic effort, to
collect, ~~cents~~ resume. 'bring together ...'
She made some motions, words failing her:
"Well, I was feeling a bit out of things" he admitted.
Gave, you ~~began~~ Englishly ~~hints~~; & I can't guess:
They take it for granted either that I know
English; or it's not worth telling me.
~~When~~ I ... Then I feel such a fool:"

For instance

"And why d'you keep this – what's it for?" he
asked, showing her the newspaper cutting. He had meant to ask
~~I don't know any of these people.~~
She took the cutting & laid it carefully on the
mantelpiece.

Yes: & of Stone Nicholas. Why do I hate him?'
~~And why do~~ I go. Ten years are not
like lines of polished steel. One lives on different
levels: in different levels: there's Shropshire,
George, ... & then in comes George. Now
then I'm here; relate one to the other:
how could I myself. when I talk to you.
when you come in, be myself; As I can do it,
conglobulate?

no: but the repealment: of the Dinner:

NYPL

Skip. Skip. Skip. Skip what's painful, what's true.
Leave out the thing I want to say. Let myself drift on
a currents ~~that~~ like those that blow the
thistle down. That's why, I see now, ~~my friend~~
~~He~~ this man goes out into the jungle: ~~Xer~~ a
spends his days tiger shooting: & goes 'into a
Bank." — Oh a mine was it? digging pellets of
gold. All refuges. Because we dare not
cannot, don't know how to — She
Her fingers ~~wringing~~ ~~was~~ kneaded an invisible
lumps of clay: & held in her hands as
~~a~~ if she held something compact,
material, substantial: there. Let
Modern life is a refuge: & it therefore requires god —
to make it tolerable. Yet when the
bells peal, on Sunday evening, "I might be a
rhinoceros for all the feeling"
She took a knife from the table.
"It doesn't cut you see," she added. She left
him to infer that the steel knife blade was
so sharp that she scarcely could lay it
across her skin: the other — the bells —
were jumbling. grumbling. confused.

NYPL

He took a turn up & down the room. He was
irritated. You went away for ten years &
came back to find everyone settled down, paired off.
They went off & answered telephones — they ~~left you~~
went to offices. Nobody had any spare time to spend:
He looked up. ~~She smiled — not because she was~~
Elvira had come in. She smiled, ~~not~~ because
he began ~~of~~ straight off in the middle of her
thoughts, "I was thinking —". She stood
with her heels balanced on the ~~sand~~ edge of the fender,
& spoke, ~~rather~~ not looking at him, rather as if she
were blowing the bubbles out of a pipe —
I was thinking
what must seem so strange to you. ~~I~~
when you come back after ~~de~~ ten years, isn't
Chalking've built houses, or pulled them down:
no, what's difficult is —" She eked out her
words with her hands; moulding something in them,
piecing together some invisible matter — "to
relate ~~the~~ different things together. I'm telephoning
when you come in," she said. "That is, I'm there, I'm
here; I'm also in the room with you. But how are
you to compose all that into one, ~~shape~~: bring : shape:
that's what makes it so difficult to a man who's
been hearing tigers howl in the jungle."

"~~There are no tigers in~~
Oh but there weren't any tigers" he said:
I was on a farm. Miles from anywhere. Sheep."

"Now we wait" she said.
The girl seemed to have disappeared. The door
stood open. Signifying that she might come back.
The table seemed laid.
"It must seem to you pretty unreal" she said,
coming back to England." Why do they do
the things they do do, you must say to yourself;

NYPL

when you open the door at Elvira's & go in & find
them all talking: What factor binds these people together
what belief? Yes, that's what you'd say to yourself.
Just as if you'd dropped from the clouds in an
aeroplane, in a meadow. You'd ~~begin to~~ think it so
strange wouldn't you, that there was a bee, that he
say there: theres a butterfly: there the man
calling the cows home: suppose you didn't even know
the language they talked."
What I find ~~mostly saying~~" said George" is
the difficulty is not to distrust other people" he said.
As the door might open at any moment the girl
button. They both spoke tentatively: half expressing
a thought: What would be the use of precision
of pinning the thought down, since it might be
interrupted at any moment. Last night at Elvira's,
~~the~~ man F called Pickersgill had said,
"I met the Prime Minister walking in St James's
Park yesterday." And George had a sense. said to himself
"That's a lie — " not wanting to be impressed:
Yet he had been impressed — by the three people's
intimacies, successes, their established look.
"It's awfully ~~difficult to get~~ the hang of things," he said
Yes. & the natural thing is, said Elvira, with her eye on
the door, if we find ourselves in a field, we're —
just having alighted from an aeroplane, —
dropped down in a country where you don't know
what language these people talk, ~~is~~ you
compare them to yourself. to the sheep — the similar —
to their disadvantage. George. ~~to them~~ them)
were walking, she mentioned, she made the
movements with her hands. I said to myself, ~~a good fellow like~~
Why not try at least, ~~when~~ a why don't we
George why don't we try. men: why don't we
give ourselves more trouble: she fumbled, & paused.
why don't we make more effort — ~~why~~ don't we
— the hero, an image that pleased her, dreamed,
light beacons on these desolate coasts.

NYPL

for untamed wanderers? Share, give, create: People are so
lonely: & so stupid; ~~&~~ so uncommunicative: &
& drift: & ~~then~~ theories are cold grit."

Now if anybody were to hear us, she said,
our words skimming over the
And when we fight shoals: & when we make an
allowance;
~~I don't like that~~
The
I don't think they have any luckier he said
~~That's what strikes me~~, that
what strikes me is that everybody's very hard -
he said. Rather if he said he had
heard more theories in a week than in ten years.
One chap says this. one chap says that.
all blame. They blame — oh,
yes. They blame the government.
heaven knows who they don't blame.
I ~~often~~ think
All men in chairs, smoking pipes: God wants them
our lives - blaming the government
That's what strikes me.
yes & then theories of what to do: ~~Dad~~. Baker costs so
much - Chew so much." perhaps any he rubbed me -
" ~~where are~~ anything could " he quoted
moment of only - ...
But whom ~~I like~~,
They laughed.
~~Meanwhile~~ And the sun rises & the sun sets."
Some ~~people~~ go to ~~[illegible]~~
And we enjoy ourselves.""
Living private lives. ~~living in dreams~~:
~~[illegible]~~;
Alone with a sense of our lonely islanders.

NYPL

Epilogue:

For whom. I wrote in the past. D'you know if they furnished the
bed I shd. understand English..
For a generation without a religion we are the most
Extraordinary – uncial, unread, honest set of people I've ever
known."
So I rather think. only suppress the preacher."
~~Leave the~~ My dear if you'd only get off your A
Chair; & live a decent private life..
private life George. I mean, where here, in this room."
Being decent to each other?"
Love one another.. But that's the point Nicholas makes –
There!
The girl came in. The man carrying a [illegible]
Oh there, there. As I said when you left me that
night; Poppy luck. well –, if you & me to stand here..
The to come in – carrying a Crust.
That ~~life~~ the problem. The people one sits
beside in railway carriages.
Well, here else. The soup.

NYPL

1934

Monday
June 4th

"What strikes me, what struck me last night" he said, "is the way ~~that~~ you all talk of money. How to make money. Money & politics"

"Dear Johnny, hope you" she said. "Norman journeys to Italy; no more wandering on bare hill sides; nightingales — frogs . . ."

The girl came in with the meat. a covered dish. As dinner was now on the table they sat down. Sara flourished the knife & fork over it & made an incision. A trickle of red juice ran out.

"Our mutton shouldn't do that" she said. She carved. It was underdone.

"Are we to eat it, or ~~are we~~ to send it back?" she said.

"Eat it," he said

"But my mutton shouldn't be underdone" she said vaguely. ~~The ... was~~ "cabbage" she said. She had lifted the lid of the vegetable dish. "And that's ~~..~~" There was a compact mass of green, oozing green water. "~~What~~ What a disgusting meal to ask a man like you to sit down to." she said.

"I've sat down to far worse than this" he said.

"In the wilds of Africa? she asked. "In that farm you were on; where no one came sometimes for months on end. ~~You never met anyone did you~~, you were alone!" "& you only talked to sheep."

"Was it nice, better, talking to sheep?"

"The country's very beautiful" he said.

"Coloured birds, I've been told" she said. "Coloured birds all colours of the rainbow: & nothing to break the silence, I suppose, save a few cattle, or a torch roaring down from the mountain;"

"Love you." he very silent he said ..

you. He wanted

NYPL

"The noise of London ..." he said. & paused, a after [illegible]
wait till the public houses shut & the people come home
drunk she said "Let me in let me in let me in" —
that was a woman crying last night.
They ate in silence.
"Cant you find ~~a room~~ anywhere else?" he
asked.
"Some place less sordid, less noisy, less
~~undecent~~" she said; she laid a red strip of
meat on his plate. "underdone. Now do
you think that girl has done her job? Shall we
shut the door? Shall we make believe we're
in a situation ~~where we~~ of unparalleled
~~splendour & comfort~~? This is Greenwich — this is
Claret, or champagne. And ~~whatever we say~~
Sheraton party — that is what we were discussing.
& the ~~the~~ talk then: & the ~~so~~ Nicholas, & the Prime Minister.
Mr Pickersgill who knows the Prime Minister.
He smiled again; ~~when he first went out,~~ he
used to write to her. She had picked up sentences out of his
letters & made them into something different;
something however that he could recognise: ~~he would have said things~~
~~And he speaking~~ to her that would have been the self he ~~so~~ showed her.
~~like that~~.
"It would be very beautiful" he said.
"Vast water & land," she continued, & ~~the they~~
as if she were remembering one of his letters, &
sometimes an old tramp — I forget what you
called them: Oh & you ~~were~~ rode all day:
you rode all day in the sun — you jumped
off & bathed in a river: & sometimes you rose in
your stirrups & shouted for ~~their~~ joy. And
there wasn't a white person for miles.
It was like the Old Testament.
"Yes" he said

he used [illegible]

broken down.
Once fooled
man —

to the calling
in —

NYPL

'What have I left out?" she asked.
"I didn't have time to think a great deal about myself"
he said. ~~Only when I wrote~~ to you."
~~Too.~~ And you thought "That's the kind of thing that
silly an experts. Flowers, butterflies birds.
~~at the secret heart of George is known~~ to George
~~And~~ Luck if you're making your living. You
don't have time to think much" he said
Although it was underdone, the mutton was good
mutton. The wine was drinkable; They ate &
drank.
And what were you doing all this time," he asked
"Making up stories about George & the ~~primeval Africa~~." she said.
wind washed trees; of
stories ~~about~~ things that does don't exist.
Oh but they did exist ~~to some~~ extent" he said.
It was amazingly beautiful there; & very lonely; &
& one ~~did~~ got into queer galled states of mind, when
one first went out. Only one gets used to it.
So you sold out & came back" she said, " &
now you're making a tour of inspection, as it were.
~~Landon then~~, England this; Landon that;
Eleanor — Nicholas, Rikengill — civilised society;
you're ~~casting a glance at~~
That's; making a chart of the world:
making a chart of the world". So am I,
George. I buy little notebooks, & I write
down what I think in ~~them~~ two; in little volumes
~~The~~ upper here
It's the uproar here —" he ~~said~~ exclaimed. A
great lorry went crashing down the street.
& something tinkled on the table.
Elvira but
Wait till the public house shuts: last night

I expect I said them, rather, to you"

You don't have time to think much of it

You're

NYPL

There was a woman crying all night 'Let me in Let
me in!"

"Couldn't you get somewhere — quieter?" he asked.
The door swung open again. The fat girl
bent in; stared at them. ~~But they had~~
~~not ready~~. She intended them to ask if
they were ready to have the plates cleared.
But they were not ready.
"It's one interruption, after another" said
Elvira: because the bells out of order.
There's always something out of order. in the house.
You turn on the tap, & the water doesn't run;
~~And there's a rain of~~ or only a little trickle.
~~And then the bath~~ —" "What were we
talking about?" she resumed. "The
nightingales singing on the lonely veldt!"
a thread ground, in the moonlight?"
"I must have written you some very silly
letters, when I first went out" he said.
"No: they were beautiful" she said. "I only
you stopped writing; I said to myself. I
~~remember~~ the very day. Remember where I was —
It was in the country; on a wild wet day;
when the rain was blowing across the
~~garden~~; & the rush of the wind (air —
how often that happens, was like a door
slammed ~~-ing~~ ed. in my face."
"One can't keep it up, ~~not~~ at that distance" he said
I stopped writing.
"Another cut from this bleeding joint?" she
asked. They had maligned the joint.
parts of it were succulent & well cooked.

wondering if the
words
were his
or.
I kept them.

NYPL

& I said to myself " ~~That man's~~ George ~~not~~ is telling me ~~the~~
~~truth anymore~~." George is not telling me: I
didn't keep the letters after that" she said.
It's so difficult to keep straight" he said.
met people you didn't know. I didn't know the
something that interested you – what you were
doing: whom you knew". He thought of the
foreign man, Nicholas.
It was awkward, saying more than you meant,
then less than you meant; these hints
were awkward;
And the mere process of making your living
took up most of your time, I suppose. She
resumed: One sheep starts coughing – you
think, all the other sheep will start
coughing: And then price of wool..
When you do get a day off, you go into a town.
You go to the Bar. You ask for a drink; you
meet the man from the next – ranch?" she
hazarded the word: ~~I daresay you had~~
~~some very queer adventures~~;

More or less – he
said

And you, Elvira? he asked. He had
always supposed that even ~~the~~ very slight,
infirmity – if he had not known yet he would
scarcely have noticed it, yet there it was –
a ~~kink~~ kink, a twist somewhere in her,
~~which made her queer~~ – had had a great
effect upon her life: Most women married
~~Nicholas?" she said.~~
I kept your letters too, he said. Until you gave up
writing them.
"Our hearts full of tears, our lives full of laughter,
When passed on the stairs . . . . "
The trombone was wailing luxuriously under

NYPL

6

the window. She fitted the words to it:
"We passed on the stairs, we passed on the ~~stairs~~ —
Sta – i – r – s" I ~~always~~ can't help
~~making~~ making up ~~words~~, What an odd
power music has over one" she added. An
~~old~~ man playing the horn. And all one's words
began to dance – to waltz – to wail – & we
passed on the stairs; my cousin George & I; he to
sorrow, I to bliss: – the tune was playing now –
he to bliss & I to sorrow: we passed on the stairs".

in the street
& she fitted the
words to it

That's the worst of this neighbourhood, she said.
They're always playing horns, & that makes one
invent tunes, or
& I to — tears." only that doesn't rhyme.
Well. have another cut on the joint George. or
Shall we keep for Lydia!"
And you wrote me an awful letter, he continued,
having thumped on the floor; abusing me like a
pickpocket.
When I came in from the Strand."
It contained all your reflections upon the
~~souls of the~~ young men like myself who had been
fighting in the war."
"It was a perfectly still winter night.
Not a sign of rain or cloud or fog. And
people were carrying wreaths in their hands."
Yes. The Eleventh of November.

The girl came in.
& They were forced to speak distantly.
~~But~~ why didn't you tell me all that at
the time? she said.
Why hadn't you the sense to tell it to yourself! she
asked. Come to think of it George, you were a

You might
have told
me
at

NYPL

grown man, an educated man." And I thought to
myself, when I wrote that—about young thugs passes
passes correctly—
"Damned little ass, young thugs all your passes
Correctly—" love of vanity: love of money: love of
power; love of medals: self important,
subhuman; ape type — he quoted,

he talked of
the wind:

Yes I'll have a some of that—
The girl had dumped the pudding down before them;
it was pink: semi-transparent; with white knobs of
to finish the gelatine
cream;
Elvira waited for him
from his letter; but he was eating:
I ~~looked~~ said to myself. George will
lock, you see.
open this letter, under the flaming Southern
sky; not a sound but the chirp of a
grasshopper. Nothing to break the eternal silence—
~~Till~~ ~~he presumes to~~ break
such was, I said he: —
into song, burst that man with [illegible] the
room under the window— under the stars he'll

then

read it, ~~he'll say to himself~~ under the southern
sky. And he'll say to himself, How dare I
the letter perhaps, take down myself,—
for what am I, who am I?— to break the
silence of the Southern sky? I, who
watch these flocks, he'll say. & feel a
sorting love run through him: yes. I thought,
to myself, he'll say to himself, the human
flock... the shepherd.. the stars. that's it
then sentinel watch on the sky— & we all,
brothers & sisters— And a tear— no. that's going
too far,
She helped herself to jelly
He wouldn't actually cry. But he'd feel,

NYPL

there's not much point in it after all. That was what
I felt. That night, when the poor wretched blowsy
cheeked people were padding along the dry
pavements, carrying their wreaths. This is Hell I
said to myself; we're the damned!"
George looked at the door. Lydia, if that was
the last girl's name, was clattering the plates onto
the tray on the floor.

Shepherd of sheep, how dare I break that silence,
Shepherd of sheep —
She drew the words out in accordance with the
melancholy hoot under the window again.
(What silly stuff music makes one think!" she broke off.)
& see, & feel. "Yes I remember," she ~~suddenly~~
~~seemed to~~ see added, vehemently. "the people
padding past me on the dry pavement with their
wreaths. This is Hell, I said, we are the damned."
George looked at the door, but the maid was
~~ban~~ banging the plates down on a tray &
probably heard nothing
"And I went on over the bridge." she continued;
& stopping in one of those little alcoves? bays? — one stops
places I looked out on the bridge where people stand,
I ~~said~~ thought; flowing water always makes one think:—
it ~~streams away~~; ~~washes away~~; perhaps
obliterates; ~~Oblivion, George~~. with its ~~lapping~~."
It gives you the sense, I mean, of rubbing out,
Oblivion. water that flows. water that
that crinkles up the lights. ~~a star for example~~ the
~~A~~ ~~Light~~ A star for example, or a lamp: the
lights of the omnibuses crossing the bridge:
~~Flowingness~~, I mean the sense of time flowing:
you know; & who am I: what is this: the

she waved her hand

NYPL

~~fore~~ dissolution of everything: it would form again like that: was of the shore:

Yes, yes, he said. I've felt that too.

They sat silent. ~~For a moment the rush of the traffic~~ & ~~the~~ the trombone had ceased. There was only the rush of the traffic.

~~How curiously~~ Sometimes one ~~we are~~ a part of our surroundings, she said: It makes one almost believe ~~doesnt it in a~~ somehow, as Nicholas used to say, in "extension of the faculties, beyond the normal": his idea that something'll go pop in the brain; & we shall admitted to a knowledge of our place in this magnificent aria harmony: this ~~orchestra~~ opera ~~of the~~ which the whole orchestra – blood heart & brain: which ~~plays~~ Thats the sort of thing he says: I ~~went across the~~ Bridge: having settled this little affair to my own satisfaction, having allowed myself to wipe away that hell, those faces, & the mouths, there was the Bridge - what d'you call it? Waterloo; & just like one's luck on these occasions, just what the Evil Spirit will do, having let one run an inch on the chain, having granted one a moments freedom. ~~oblivo oblivo~~ oblivion: & all things reconciled - here comes a Rolls-Royce: & it stopped, in a block, in the lamplight; - ~~there~~ I was looking straight in; & there was a man, with a face like — She smiled: There was a man & there was – I wont specialise. Grace, of the upper classes; I wont say that he was lolling back on his Cushion. smoking a cigar. The light of our

She tapped her finger on the [illegible]

NYPL

diamond burning in her shirt front. Oh no. ~~It~~
There was nothing spectacular, melodramatic about him:
Only his face — the insolence, the hardness, the
great growl you knew lurking in the collar: the
ridge of the nose: the hardness of it all, the
authority of it all: the sublime inhumanity:
there he sat: ~~g~~ not lolling back: nothing spectacular or
melodramatic: only merely an upper class
Englishman: a ~~Damned brute~~ I said, time

with a great sur.

went wash you out. And she — there was a
woman with her — took advantage of the pause
under the lamplight to polish her lips:
~~And as~~ which were already like a red spade in
~~the middle of her face~~

George lit a cigarette.

"And then there was ~~a very beautiful~~ the dawn"
he said ~~the letter~~ when you'd described that man —
~~you went on,~~ you remember, ~~you went to the~~
~~window, I looked out.~~ ~~There were~~ sparrows,
peace, the sun rising?!"

She smiled, pulling a plate full of apples
towards her.

We both behaved magnificently; we were
great fools when we were young George.
Dawn over Whitechapel. Peace among the hills."

She began peeling her apple.

"Pity one cant begin all over again" he said.
We needn't ~~a~~ have wasted quite so much
time."

Circumnavigating ~~the~~ — that's a fine word" she said.
Making hot shots.."

But ~~[illegible]~~ as a [illegible], she said, accepting a cigarette
from his case, I thought always,

NYPL

that poor young man, that's what he likes. When you went
to the war, I mean – "He gave his bridle reins a shake,
adieu for ever more, I said, adieu for ever more."
I was only a very ignorant, ~~very foolish young~~ boy man.
Some woman, I daresay, – yes. coming out of the
Temple one night, ~~threw a feather [illegible]~~.
threw a feather at me."
What brutes ~~people are~~. always laughing at us, always
jeering: Always saying unless you do as I
tell you ... unless you wear my uniform.
And you must have six buttons down the front.
And this is where you kneel; & this is where you
cry:" She puffed at her cigarette, leaning back in
her chair.
"~~It was Stell; he said~~ ~~You were right: & twice.~~
Stell ~~" he said~~
They smoked in silence.
He picked up the broken apple peel: he began
to cut it & into little strips & threw it down.
~~It was Stell, you" he said~~
But how's one to put an end to it!" his description of the
maid had gone back to ~~the~~ her
perpetual pilgrims marching with their wreaths
up & down the Strand that still November night
under the glare of the ~~arc~~ arc lamps.
And then she had seen the man in the Car–.
~~It's just the same today and was then~~" he said.
"I ~~go down to the city:~~ I ~~see~~ went down to
the city today" he said, "to see ~~about a~~ "Cyrus Paul" job."
"And did they ~~keep you~~ waiting in a
You waited in an office, no in a
~~sublime~~ apartment; smelling of polish:
two roses; a silver vase; a ~~photograph~~
She smiled. "And they said, Come this way Sir!"

NYPL

Well but how are we going to live and bit
Eleanor he said. How are we going to behave like
rational human beings? How are we going to
stop talking about money & politics like the people
at [illegible] last night. Its interesting enough, he
added; but it struck me, he said, when I
left her,
& walked home, she interposed, with the air
brushing your forehead.

There weren't any drunken

The streets were amazingly free of drunken people; he
said: that's what struck me. Not so many
prostitutes either. Things have improved, since I
was here last. What they say, say young women:
"The upper classes have taken up the job."
"Educated Beautiful girls, she said vaguely, coming down from
Oxford & Cambridge, where they've been
padding about with papers & things & cocking
snooks at Edward behind his back; let's have a
shot at ~~that too~~ it. See what it feels
like. Being provided with the necessary
whatever you call 'em."
"So that they don't have children" he added.
"Ones & twos: Not fours & fives" And so
you came back, she resumed, & sat down in
your room."
"And I said to myself" — he was laughing at her.
imitating her.
"Have a little more wine, then,"
she said. She poured out a glass. Isn't it an
queer reflection: something to write down under
London Society in your note book page:
Only when we're very slightly tipsy —
"But I am not" he murmured,

NYPL

do we love,' she continued, sipping her wine. "terror of each
other. Hatred & fear. The twin goddesses that preside over
our lives. Hush, says alcohol, brushing these
horned horny scaly lacy with her downy wing:
lighting on the eyelids with the feet of a moth ~~[illegible]~~.
which being blinded, and come crowding, then is
thrown to the 'tune of the barrel organ round the
corner – love & laughter. The song that woman is
singing over the way is called, Roses in June."
Well then Eleanor,' he said, 'tell me this:
why did you quarrel with your friend Nicholas?"
You know I thought you were going to marry your
friend Nicholas: & for one moment,
heaven help me – I was horribly jealous."
My friend Nicholas, he says to me, Look here Eleanor:
we will set up house together. In Chelsea, or
Pimlico, where? I said to him: and
buy the table linen, & have the forks stamped
with our joint initials intertwined? a week to a
And ask the neighbours in once a Thoroughly
dinner off – leg of mutton, married to
well done Nicholas has had to be, the souls free.
Nicholas. No, I said. There should be no
In our world I said. marriage. Our
more marrying. Jenny on
world which is the world of the soul; I mean
no more wedding rings. Being spiritually
bound I said, ~~but on a~~ lay the chain of gold upon us:
Born, I said, of the spiritual aristocracy of the
word; ~~what I am~~: giving, not taking:
free not bound:

needing no chain

That song's over, she concluded; ~~Roses in June~~ The street had
The woman who was singing across
stopped.

Now we'll change on the street again" she said, &

NYPL

& then the fat girl called Lydia will clear away."
And then if you dont mind I shall light a cigar," he said.
What's your next job?" she asked. "Something in the City?"
The gentleman clearing the table.
Suppose I commit the unpardonable sin — [illegible] a man —
of not having a ~~the~~ job?" he said biting off the
end of his cigar.
All your wool having turned to gold" she continued:
like the man in the story book: what's his name?"
The telephone rang.
"I'm not here, I'm not here!" she exclaimed
The telephone went on ringing.
"That's ~~the voice~~ of Nicholas, she said; peremptory,
agent; ~~raging~~ breaking into the privacy of the
mind: violating solitude: sarcastic, ah; ~~but~~
~~making wants, demanding; possessing~~.
ringing ringing ringing: bank, bank; That's Nicholas;
but I rang to him, oh you who have forbidden
who have compromised, commuted; taking
the gramophone from the
lion & use for a lectern: "she rapped out the
[illegible] ?, ?, ?, ?: in time to the persistent ringing of the
telephone bell: "Tell him, I'm not here: I'm not at the mountain —
deepening; a voice that's yours; like
dew; must; not to be had on these terms:
the telephone ~~went~~ [illegible] on George [illegible].

That's Nic.
:
That's Nicholas:

—

Let me Take ~~it~~ off the receiver then
No no no, she stopped him. Because
I am here; he's there: There's two sides to the
soul, to the very situation: the moon has
two faces: life very complex. Call it
simple? Call love simple? do you: Why
simple?
lovers —
The telephone went on ringing.

NYPL

he came to
me when
he was
lonely: when he
was:
for me:
as the telephone
rang the
speaker.

we must

There was a
long
pause.
The telephone chased
(Eleanor
her
whirlwind on
her shoulder)

by the voice:
together.

his soul seeking my soul. to mix to mingle. After all, he
was a wretched Polish Jew, without a coat to his
back; & a ~~soul in~~ future in his eyes: & he came to
me, when I was alone too: What then are we
to do George? How can we answer him, & tell him
very. Nicholas, whom I dont love, do love, the ~~[illegible]~~
~~What are~~ dont love, do love." dont love; do"
Stop that infernal noise, at them" he said.
He took up the receiver: I'm [illegible]
"Hullo." ~~Yes~~ he said "That you. Eleanor. I'm
George. ~~Ye I'm~~ dining with Elvira. Yes I'll
tell her; No, ~~she's not~~... She's sitting
on the arm of the chair; ~~just the same as usual~~
talking: with a smudge on her face. Talking:

Eleanor ~~hut do~~ hung up the receiver with a smile. She
& turned to her niece, [illegible] sister Peggy:
smiled ~~thinking of~~ looking at the little telephone
picture; the vision called up so vividly for a moment,
as she spoke to her nephew; a ~~he~~ of two people
sitting in a small room; one on the arm of the
chair with a smudge on her face.
"George is dining with Elvira" she said.
Peggy looked at her. She ~~did not~~ was not
thinking what she said. She wondered why, in
the middle of talking about something quite
different, quite suddenly, Eleanor jumped up
as if an idea had struck her, & said, "..." &
"... I'll just ~~find out of~~ [illegible] Elvira ~~is~~ ~~com~~"
went leaving her sentence unfinished. It was
her aunt Eleanor was becoming more & more
disconnected, inconsecutive: Now what was she
saying, as she stood, in her evening cloak,
like a person poised between two worlds,
~~thinking~~ smiling at what had been said: &
forgetting what she had been saying.

NYPL

the case stil or say. It doesnt admit of a simple
summing up: it was not yes & no: it
after all, he came up the stairs when I was alone,
when he was alone; — & poor, & in those days
truthful; when we were young; uncontaminated:
Tell him to come, tell him to go? whats to be done?
Nicholas, whom I dont love, do love; dont love do —
Exasperated by the ringing of the bell & her voice
jerking in time to it, he said, "I'm going
to stop that infernal bell anyhow," & took up
the receiver:

No, she's not dressed —

in an old - pinafore. She's talking. Just the
same as ever." He looked at her again to
verify her description. Dishevelled. With a
smudge on her face."

It did not annoy [illegible] her. He would not see the
picture that Eleanor was smiling at.
He wondered why, in the middle of talking about
something quite different — about politics — her
aunt had jumped up, & said, as if an idea had
struck her, "I'll just remind Eleanor," — she was
getting more dis connected, inconsecutive; : what
was she going to say now, as she stood

NYPL

What she saw was an Aunt standing at the telephone
wrapped in her Arab cloak; smiling; having ~~broken~~
~~off what~~ forgotten what she was about to say; having
in her inconsecutive random way started up
while they were discussing something quite different. :
& said ~~saying~~ Oh I must remind Eleanor: ' ~~have to~~
~~telephone~~ in her ~~the~~ crimson cloak, ~~starred~~ with gold
flowers; ~~the~~ with thick white hair, brushed up,
rather tanned, — for she was only just back from
India. She looked, a ~~philosophic old~~ fine old
philosopher — a queer old bird, Peggy thought:
for ~~a so often~~ ~~she always~~ ~~seem~~ her mixing
~~reverence~~ admiration, ~~love~~, affection, & ~~laughter~~
a sense ~~of an~~ that Aunts ~~being~~ was also ~~comic~~ suddenly
~~wild, queer~~, comic, laughable; always
~~thinking that she~~ interrupting what she was
saying; jumping up to fetch something; remembering
something, as now: & then, as now coming back,
~~hesitatingly to~~ hesitatingly, 'What were we
saying?' ; & then, as likely as not, something else
would strike her; ~~Nor could Peggy~~ imagine going
out to a party in a ~~cloak~~, which she had
~~just as the~~ Nor could she remember either
the Eleanor telephoning; the picture of Eleanor's
mother which hung beside the telephone; ~~this~~
~~the difference between~~ ~~something~~ that was ~~in her~~
still in her eyes.

There we

~~what was George~~. Dining with Eleanor "Eleanor
[illegible]. why
"You've had it cleaned?" Peggy said
spontaneously.
~~The~~ "Mama's glow picture!" "Doesn't it look
nice!" very ~~smooth~~ There's a little man, she
said, who cleans pictures. How the ribbons
the ~~hair~~ the muslin. the rose. the ribbons
all shone, melting into each other, softly

NYPL

brilliantly: ~~the~~ in particular, a knot of ribbon, that had
been obscured under the dust, was now ~~bright~~ visible
D'you see, there's a flower ~~fallen~~ on the left ~~grass~~" — It was
little man — if you want pictures cleaned, do get him;
I'll give you the address... and he'd ~~never seen a~~
But was it like her?" Peggy ~~asked~~ interrupted
Not ~~as I remember her,~~" ~~Eleanor sighed~~ She had
was sometimes irritated ~~beyond measure~~ by her
Aunt's ~~Sara~~ ad habit of adding unnecessary
information: & yet, & ~~given~~ how admirable, at
her age, to be always on the go: she was only
just back from India; ~~&~~ unable to resist
highly coloured advertisements of tours, she
roamed about the world, ~~quite~~ alone: always
picking up a stranded all: had ~~been all over~~
the place: ~~& not with~~ not minding, as most
people would, ~~too~~, ~~the~~ being on a boat, with a
party: in fact she would say, the chances were,
that you ~~found~~ picked on somebody on every ship
quite out of the way. Hence the astonishing number of
relen her acquaintance: & ~~their~~ the probability, at every
~~meal, of~~ ~~if you came to see her~~ of finding
Mount Royal & the places they lived at — ~~as the~~ in
Woking — villas at Woking; ~~as the~~ or at Bremen:
"Not; as I remember her" Eleanor, said. "Well, when I was a
flung back over her head: No; I don't think even as a
child perhaps: But she was very pretty.
child — No. But of course what is interesting, as one
grows older is ~~that~~ what they thought so ugly —
red hair for instance — turns out to be
pretty — ~~And~~ The fashion changes said Peggy.
Yes: ~~fashion~~
And I often ask myself, said Eleanor,
she lit a cheroot, & ~~puff~~ smoked it
meditatively, whether — .. " she paused.

NYPL

whether — Peggy prompted her.
D'you ~~know that of something~~ dear me, said
Eleanor. clapping her hand ~~to her head~~
back what is "forells".' ~~However~~ Now there wont be
time to smoke them before we go.— ~~there wont~~
Dear me how annoying — she added. I had it on the
tip of my tongue, & then, Peggy saying that, & you saying
that. & my saying that; d'you know the feeling
when one's had something to say, & been interrupted?
And it seems to stop the way —' so that
you cant think whatever you want to say — ...
so that — perhaps, it'll well get ready now, & you call a
Cab now, & ~~then we'd better~~ go."

She rose:
Peggy sat still for a moment, smoking her cigarette.
If Eleanor was now going to wash, as it seemed
from the sounds next door, there was no immediate
hurry. She looked again at the picture of her
Grandmother that hung over Eleanor's writing table;
the picture that had been cleaned by the little man,
so that you could see a flower that had never
been seen before. She smiled. How could anyone
say that there was a likeness between them? she
asked, looking at the simpering face of the
young woman in white! Yet that she was her
Granddaughter. In some way, she was akin;
For which reason, she thought thinking how many
much she would have preferred ~~not to go~~ to any
~~party~~ tonight, she would have to go; to the
party longer: & feeling as she did, a sort of
affection, duty?: mainly that other people
would be hurt: her father would be hurt:
Delia would be hurt: ~~Still the~~ the older
generation And it was time, she thought,
getting up to go to the telephone: family ties:

to stay at
home.

NYPL

the family voice in particular: memory in common:
they still had some force, though not for her what they had
for the older generation; What would the number
of the cab rank be? she asked herself: As a matter
of fact she was staring at it, written out, by Eleanor:
along with butcher number, grocer number & so on, pinned to the
top of the desk. Raised the receiver, but no one
answered for a second; & she thought of ~~the~~ what Eleanor
had seen, a moment ago, sitting there: George is
dining with Elvira; how she had smiled at the
sight at the other end of the telephone.

One of these days, she thought they'll make an
see the person: quite soon, perhaps: will one be able to
see what the other person's seen, what Eleanor saw?
Would the last picture be left hanging there? Should
I see George? " Then the invisible voice said
Number please. & she gave it. Then she waited.
She caught sight of ~~the nails~~ her own finger nails,
holding the receiver: efficient trimmed polished:
yes, but not painted. A compromise between
science & (she was a doctor) & ~~Sci~~ fashion. The
Neither
spoiled. A creditable compromise.
On the one hand, Eleanor did not polish her nails:
on the other. Lots of people painted them
red, green, silver: "~~Yes. I want~~ Are you the cab
rank? ~~& the~~ A voice said hullo: That was
the burly man in the shelter, she supposed. She
& she ~~said~~ ~~ordered~~ ordered the cab: gave the address;
& hung up the receiver, just as Eleanor came
back.

In future One of these days you'll be able to see things at the
end of the telephone she said; Eleanor was
arrayed in her Arab cloak still; ~~early the~~ was
but she had white gloves in her hand; & a veil
over her hair.

They stood at the window watching for the
cab, & ~~Down~~ because, there was a
pause to fill in; & the view from the window

NYPL

over the roofs, over the Square ~~for~~ yards of garden, down into
back yards, always seemed, like music, at a
restaurant, to fill up the awkward silence;
It was ~~a~~ curious to see cabs going round a
corner, & coming down a street: curious to see
~~people~~ them, & to hear nothing. And to see people
going upstairs: Then the flat was so high up,
that it seemed to present a section of life:
life going on beneath: silent: for at this height.
~~no noise could~~ the noise of a single cab. &
footsteps was inaudible.
Probably, quite naturally, Eleanor had not
attached no particular meaning to the ~~the~~.
"~~one of these days you'll be able to see things~~" It merely
her remark about the telephone:
gave her a general ~~of~~ idea: about the progress of
science: for she said, looking at the sky now,
"That's where I saw my first aeroplane. I
was standing here" she said, — it must have
been one of the very early days in the flat," she said,
~~but I never do draw the curtains~~, & there, just
between those chimneys; over there — "
there were factory chimneys in the houses —
I saw a ~~black~~ shot: like a bird & I said to whoever it
was — I rather think it was Miriam — yes,
it was Miriam — she was staying with me,
helping me to get in

— That's old age, ~~said~~ ~~not~~ Peggy noted:
putting in unnecessary details: that the only — generalising things
~~left~~ thing that's growing on her — the same as jumping up in the middle of
things, — senility — Yes? she said
It ~~can't~~ must be a bird: it's too
~~took me both hands~~.
big: Suddenly it struck me. No it's not a
bird. it's an aeroplane! I can't tell you the
odd feeling: Nobody'll ever have it again:
You know they'd flown over the channel, not
so long before And going up to bed that night

turning out the light
turning on that

I said to her

NYPL

83

somebody said things will never would be the same."

Never. never." ~~E~~.

~~There was~~ Oh well, said Peggy — she had been going to say something about aeroplanes not making so much difference as one thought: about the the extraordinary ignorance still of human beings, for the ~~war~~ that was her line ~~with her aunt~~ — to disabusing the lay mind of its persistent belief that science, medical science in particular had achieved so much: for truly she was influenced rather by its ignorance: but when not at the aeroplane Eleanor sighed. It was It was at some other thoughts!

Oh dear, she said, oh dear.

Oh never mind, she said: When; that cat She ~~footled~~ Fused away. Coming!

Old age, again, thought Peggy. Something suddenly ~~that~~ makes them remember. She looked at Eleanor. bending over the writing table, fidgety among the letters: the things: They've seen such lots of things; & feelings: & their

Oh yes. They've had such lots. It was as if a girl had they don't say. come a blown open a door; & out had come from one many child that; from Eleanor past: which she always in those seventy odd years: with the extraordinary generously concealed, with the extraordinary Now she was & considerateness of the old. What were you what ~~Au~~ Eleanor she said. thinking of?

"What?" she said, meaning ~~why do you sigh.~~" What did you think of to make you sigh?

Eleanor had thought of the ~~dead man~~ drowned man bobbing on the waves. She had seen that too in the sky one night; ~~but~~ standing at the window; but

NYPL

1911

Never over, done with: Of all matters, to bring back
that back the thought: to

"We could do without aeroplanes, I agree" she said
fumbling among her papers. for she was aware that
her niece ~~liked to~~ ~~to~~ took perhaps rather a cynical
view of the art ~~of medicine~~: ~~Peggy, she thought, was~~
Peggy was apt to be cynical about the art of
medicine: ~~& then~~ "And motor cars," as far as I'm
concerned, she added; not hot water; not
electric light; but otherwise —" she paused.
Ah there it is! she exclaimed, pouncing on some
paper that she had been looking for. "Do
remind me to ask Edward — I know ~~I shall~~ forget —"
She began tying a knot in her handkerchief.
And then, as if aware that at any moment the
bell would ring to say that the taxi was at
the door, she ~~began looking~~ opened her bag &
counted: keys, purse, handkerchief, — you see
I don't have to carry about lipsticks & rouge as you do —
she added: Not that I dislike them on the young —
Peggy bowed: she was well on in the thirties:
not at all; but what I have to remember is
to ask Edward about Runcorn's boy ~~going up~~ to
~~Oxford~~ in —" she stopped suddenly. Her eye
had been caught by a copy of the evening paper,
with its broad bold headline, its photograph.
What a face! she exclaimed. What a face.
~~My dear Peg~~ ~~Oh you brute~~! she exclaimed.
Peggy glanced at the paper. A fat man
in uniform vociferating — she was too shortsighted to
read the name at that distance.
~~That what I do to you~~! Exclaimed Eleanor.
She tore the paper across, & threw it on the floor.
Her face flushed; her eyes shone.
Damned humbug! she exclaimed.

NYPL

85

The bell pealed loudly. The cab was at the door.
~~As they went downstairs~~, Peggy followed her.
Eleanor's anger ~~was so~~ surprised her. It was
Extraordinarily spontaneous — an outburst:
the fumbling old woman had suddenly thrown off
age with its hesitation, its qualifications: &
away all the caution, the whittlings, the hesitation,
suddenly out burst a this voice, ~~a which~~ was not
the voice of a ~~perfectly~~ deeprooted, instinctive,
hatred: such as ~~was~~ a generation, a
tradition, something that Eleanor felt profoundly,
& it was ~~not~~ for a cause. So ~~Delia~~
she had heard Delia denounce England: so
& her father, reading of some iniquity in
Africa or Judea, ~~money~~ crumple up the
foreign page of the Times, & sit scowling at the head
of the table — What a generation, she thought, as
she followed her aunt downstairs: How
they could lose their tempers over ~~states~~
politics & statesmen, they could ~~feel~~ a
attaching this extraordinary value to public affairs:
~~What a strange pass~~ How odd to feel that a
single man was a devil — or a hero, as the case
~~might be~~: how they hero-worshipped, &
devil-denounced; they ~~scoundrel~~ Gladstone, Parnell,
whoever it might be, the representative of all
to her, obviously it was
virtue or vice; whereas, seemed the-
impossible for one human being,
to be ~~more~~ anything
Hate of the world, to* "we have ceased to
monstrous either way. " she thought, following
believe in great men
up & down the innumerable steps, keeping
behind her, for her long red cloak
trailed on the stairs. The figure still
seemed erect with indignation. Down they
went, flight after flight.
"What a climb, ~~late at~~ every day"!

Damned humbug,
poor little
puppet". —
she thought,
after fat faced
open mouthed
ones,

NYPL

To me he
stands for
the ~~end~~ of
death of
England
Cared the end
[illegible]

Insert the scene
on to its
place in the
argument
(she was
always
right:

Peggy thought. Indeed, when they got to the bottom Eleanor stopped for a moment. She was a little heated.

"Don't tell me I've left that letter upstairs, in the room, in my rage?" No, she had tucked it in her bag. "~~That man~~ the ~~sums~~ up all that's most delectable ~~in human nature~~" she said briefly. "~~Cab~~ The only things one ever cared about. "Liberty" she said ~~getting into the~~ cab." ~~Liberty~~. ~~Justice~~. ~~Freedom~~." She sat down rather heavily in her corner. & the cab. ~~to sound — the second~~ But of ~~mentioning~~ jargon to [illegible] to Justice, liberty...

The cab started.

~~What informed her, as it~~ ~~& Peggy had~~ heard & Peggy thought — the In her eye — suspicion. ~~the common cab which showed~~ word. The whole scene, For a second, as they sat She ~~could~~ not became. silent side by side, ~~something~~ ~~the words~~ Peggy swiftly ~~made for an argument~~; arranged the scene as argument: "For I agree they [illegible] were always talking about justice & liberty: but women like ~~Eleanor~~ living on the [illegible] of the law: but ~~not~~ women like [illegible] " & ~~in imagination, the women~~ my Aunt" she would say: They did sacrifice a great deal... She lives without a maid, at the top of a superior workman dwelling — ~~when~~ she talks of Justice & liberty —"

The cab drove on; ~~suddenly~~ down the mild ugly little streets of the respectable quarter: They would ~~Even in a hurry — it would take them~~ drive & drive, & drive; Delia's flat was at the other end of London.

That was it! " Eleanor exclaimed, raising her hand to her forehead, and the obstruction she had mentioned earlier, had melted: ~~What~~ Did you lie to your mother — what for did that — very.. In her anxiety to catch the thought she produced then a state on what it changed nothing whatever to her "I mean" she laughed. ever.

NYPL

neither of them spoke for a time. Peggy was going over the
scene with the newspaper; damned humbug, or
damned bully her aunt had said. "Damned" on
the lips of a woman of her generation had a
peculiar force. because their expressions were for the
most part so weak: my mother she thought ~~would~~
~~have~~ said Bother, or Drat. or Bless me, or for goodness sake, –
Her grandmother Chenney however, especially when
she became stone deaf, would sometimes let fall
the most curious expressions: she used to
shout remember on them: to a maid, ~~in a rage~~.

who had dropped a looking glass

But her Aunt interrupted her.

Look. Peggy, she said. That's where we used to live" looking out of the window, Peggy could ~~only~~ see a
that was our turning." Peggy,
long street starred with lamps: one of those
nondescript long terraces, which, with their
pillars & steps ~~seemed~~ hastily built, when space was
cheap, & the builder seemed to credit the human
race with an infinite capacity for producing
~~well to do~~ large families & possessing many
servants, top hats, perambulators, window boxes,
carriages & horses perhaps.

The Pillar box, ~~said~~ Eleanor murmured. Why
~~she~~ should she refer to the pillar box, ~~Peggy~~ would
~~wondered~~ could nothing, in particular? – ~~well~~ Peggy
~~yet for some reason,~~ it yet
~~when we posted the letters~~

They swept on. Eleanor sound heavily.
~~"Young thinking~~ you know ~~people tell~~ a ~~great many~~
ancient people" she stopped: as usual she had
begun in the wrong place. "People say ~~old age is~~ that
~~they~~ ~~they're~~ so ~~afraid~~ of getting old." But,
there's no reason to be afraid of getting old," she thinks
~~in a way~~. Everything is so much more interesting:
that's where I used to live, I think: that's where the
she hesitated for a moment – who was the
man your father used with? – he's dead now.

that was long ago.

NYPL

NY.

(his son died

I used to dine with him - three - sometimes in one of those houses.
Do people give dinner parties in your generation?
Oak Cupboard. That sort of thing. You went down
arm in arm. There was a kind of society you dont get
now. ~~Very dull.~~ Horribly dull. Poor man, he
was a great authority upon - what was it. Poesoni
I think. People did in those days talk; at
greater length. More leisure: yes: but after all,
does it make very much difference? I mean,
does ~~human nature~~ human nature - having more
time? No, I dont think we were more often horribly bored:
intelligent. I think we were But what I was
at least I was: ~~In my~~
going to say was, the pleasure of growing old is
~~that~~ to merely at least, is that. ~~nothing~~
~~with standing at the window just now:~~ ~~Yes. Memory.~~
one ~~they come on top of another.~~ which is of
luckily one loses one's memory, after one loses one's
Course always possible - how many times I've
memory, ~~or~~ dear me, how many times I've
driven along here: when I was a girl, driving
out with my father. mother ... not we but papa
didnt have a carriage of our own: the livery stables.
had an arrangement with perhaps the man
Yes, there was some arrangement: the buttons —
kept a coat with our crest on I'm not at all sure,
to ~~that when I~~ ~~to me~~, looking at the
on the whole; Yes, Peggy. made me think of that -
window just now made me think of that - remembering the
ah there is of course remembering - She stopped.
~~aeroplane~~: remembering —
Peggy knew why she stopped " she said
Memories arent ~~so~~ always pleasant ~~for us~~."
rather sharply.
~~What a clumsy fool I am Eleanor~~
~~thought.~~

NYPL

"Shall we ~~ask him to~~ just stop & call in —" said
Eleanor suddenly. "Maggie & Renny live somewhere
up here dont they? She peered out of the window.
We might see if they're coming — we might give
them a lift. Only I cant be sure of the
~~[illegible]~~ street. Wickham, Wyndham — you know."
Chester off Westminster. The house was too"
small now the children are grown up..."
Unluckily the ~~head~~ of the car ~~was too great~~ to carry them
~~admit of~~ was much high where people
beyond the dangerous area where people
might live who might be called in on; —
"No I've not seen them for an age" said Peggy.
She remembered the address perfectly. but
knowing Renny. Maggie it scarcely seemed to her
likely that they would welcome a demand to
call at this hour of night, a demand to ~~How~~
turn out & come across London...
~~So~~ Yet Eleanor was really enjoying herself! Or was
this party genuinely excited her. Or was
it mainly the sense of duty, the extraordinary
tie which the older generation felt for family;
the selfish yet beautiful absorption which
the people of their generation had in their own
~~family~~, ~~or which~~ so ~~that~~ relation. The
pathetic effort they made to herd them together,
to round them up, to mass them into one
room? "Next year, the tide" said Eleanor.

"Come with me Peggy."

~~As her~~ mind was still ~~occupied with~~ making her still busied ~~with her~~
~~Aunt as~~ in making her aunt representative, to ~~her~~
friend ~~John~~ Roland P at the hospital, she
~~kept a very~~ tight ~~made~~ used what she said
as evidence — against her or in her favour;
against ~~the standard~~ ~~her~~ ~~the~~ the ~~standard~~ ~~not~~ so

NYPL

into a Charact-

It would be easy to make her into a figure of fun..
They did laugh at her, & imitate her a good deal -
"As old Eleanor would say -" & so on.
"And the experiment with the guinea pig," she
said, "You were telling me. What happened?"
Peggy told her.
"I see, so it didn't prove anything: so you've got to
begin all over again: ~~Dear me, how tiresome;~~ &
yet how very interesting it must be:
Yes, that was another quality: ~~her the supposed~~ That too
~~lacking an inherent in~~ other qualities.
could be made ~~ridiculous~~ comic: & yet, as a
whole, ~~far from being~~ that one could somehow
make ~~one~~ all these things go on at the same
time, as they did, now that she was there.
Her vitality is so great - much greater than ours:
because she's never been through the mill? My
Because she lived in that awful house?
father always said she gave up everything:
as the eldest daughter: She ~~[illegible] [illegible] books~~:
would always ask the name of a book & put it down
on her library list

Eugenics - amused Elea.

She was still making her representative, she used this
respect to prove ~~that, after all these years of suppression~~ it
her vitality: after ~~all these years of suppression:~~ ~~in the~~
negative the right way to bring people up: to
~~they attacked old age with such gusto.~~
suppress them in their youth - then they attacked old
age with such gusto. Of course it was easy
enough to laugh at her: indeed, they did: "As
old Eleanor would say" & so on; but & yet in
her presence, when all ~~these~~ things we ~~were~~ going on at
the same time, ~~they there was nothing~~ how
different it was! What depths there were!
How much was unexpected! How extraordinarily
complex everyone was! That sigh for instance:
~~Ah, they thought Peggy~~

One never knew what was coming next or how things combined?

NYPL

NYP

As she was still giving an account of Eleanor to
her friend ~~Alison~~ Cedric Roland, everything she said went
towards it: ~~became evidence~~ was instances used as evidence.
'Let's call upon Maggie & Renny': evidence of family
feeling ~~which were~~; & then ~~the~~ Eleanor said —
again how characteristically,
"And the experiment with the guinea pig —
did that come off?"
Peggy told her.
"I see, so it didn't prove anything. So you've got to
begin all over again." "How very interesting!"
That was ~~so~~ like her; her this ~~perfectly~~ genuine
though & uninstructed interest ~~in~~ ~~the world~~
her interest in science. "I must get that back"
she would say: "Could you possibly
explain — in very simple language — this new — to
theory?" At that point ~~an orange~~ might be required.
explain that — an orange might be required.
Of course, Peggy admitted, her ~~interest~~ ~~were~~ but what
knowledge was scrappy in the extreme; ~~Roland~~
she was trying to make ~~them to~~ understand was the
make the her friend understand was the way these old
~~extreme to~~ ~~energy~~, ~~vitality~~, — had kept
women ~~after all~~ like Eleanor — had kept
their interest in everything; & then, as if
~~from~~ she had guessed that Peggy was
~~trying to describe her, Eleanor~~ ~~contd~~ their company
although, she readily admitted, their company
was exhausting, ~~distracting~~, & in truth, they
they seemed unable to think of the same ~~at a~~
for more than two minutes
time.
Oh but the difficulty of fixing any notion of
anything" she interjected. ~~It~~ was only
that — Eleanor had said, going back;

NYPL

it seemed to some idea depending from Maggie & Renny,
~~I know~~ why on earth should we turn out
at this hour, & dine all across London when
it would be so much nicer to stay at home: only
its a way of seeing people, perhaps; one wonders)
see; & now that we're all getting on — not yet, no —
one doesnt like to miss chances..."
for then though there was nothing 'like her' in
the remark. nothing characteristic of idea old
Eleanor'; ~~still the more~~ she seemed as she
spoke the commonplace words to escape
from all attempts to pen her down. to
become what Roland was: & Peggy was.
living going on, indefinable. a being without
outline, & characterless, as ~~so~~ a being in
whom so many million unknown lives
had spent that to all seem her up
was such hopeless: she gave it up.
She took refuge in the ~~belief that~~ she thought:
that was why she liked Eleanor,
because it did know what it knew for the two
certain. only it knew so little.
sighed.
You're much too young to feel that of course"
said Eleanor.
But I was thinking how much older we are —"
our generation than yours" said Peggy.
I was thinking, your generation anyhow you, Eleanor,
have so much more reason than we have: you're
interested... you're alive... When I'm
to that I be ~~as much~~ as ready to go off to
India...
~~That reminds me. I was going to ask you,~~
what I really want to see before I die. is

NYPL

it seemed to some idea descending from Maggie & Renny;
~~I know~~ why on earth should one turn out
at this hour, & dine at an London when
it would be so much nicer to stay at home: only
its a way of seeing people, perhaps; one wonders)
so; & now that one's at getting on — not yet, no —
one doesn't like to miss chances: .."
for then though there was nothing 'like her' in
the remark. nothing characteristic of 'dear old
Eleanor', ~~still the more~~ she seemed as she
spoke the commonplace words to escape
from all attempts to pen her down. to
become what Roland was; & Peggy was,
loving, young, indefinable; a being without
outline, or characteristics, ~~as so~~ a being in
whom so many million unknown forces
had spent that to all seem her up
was such heaven: she felt sure.
She took refuge in the ~~feeling that~~ liked Eleanor, she thought:
That was why she
became it did know what it knew for
certain. Only it knew so little. The two
sighed.
You're much too young to ~~[illegible]~~ feel that of course"
said Eleanor. "
But I was thinking how much older we are —"
our generation than yours" said Peggy.
I was thinking, your generation, anyhow you, Eleanor,
have so much more reason than we have: you're
interested ... you're alive ... when I'm
70 shall I be ~~as much~~ as ready to go off to
India — ..
~~That reminds me. I was going to ask you.~~
What I really want to see before I die. is

NYPL

some absolutely wild place, said Eleanor. I was
not India: China! What about China! "
Was it that you were so suppressed when you were young?
Peggy asked. Living in Abercorn Terrace.. all
that?" They were still passing unapproachable
family mansions with porticoes.

Oh well, I dont know, said Eleanor.
It was a very large family one. There wasnt
the scope then that there is now. ~~They didnt~~
One wasnt allowed to do what you do..
Its been ~~at~~ an interesting time to live in –
When I think I wasnt allowed to go to a party
alone: & the cabs: you had to shut the door:
Yes: you had to shut the door, if you drove in
a hansom: & there were certain streets you
couldnt walk down: how its changed! Of
course, there was a kind of charm.. the
ceremony: peoples clothes: and it took such
a time: Hooking up. getting ready; And
only one bath in all that house! I can
remember, when we were children,

Eleanor laughed. She so seldom thought about
herself: ~~that~~ so that the ~~opening~~ chance Peggy gave her to
think of herself, ~~was amusing~~ as suppressed
amused her. Yes we were, she said. Yes.
compared with you. I remember.. If
she compared this actual present moment
with the same occasion, when she was a girl,
all sorts of memories at once rushed in:
so many that she could not ~~decide~~ select.
Straw in somewhere: a certain
clock at Hyde Park Corner: its dull
yellow face & the hands at 2 or 3:
market carts: Oh my God Oh my
God! said Delia: & the [illegible]

NYPL

died; my youth is over: & Morris posting a letter; &
the washing label & Bobby's walrus:

Yes, she said. Why on earth is he talking in
that way? she interjected. They were under
approaching the statue of Nurse Cavell.

Like an advertisement of sanitary
towels" said Peggy. ~~with~~ glancing at the figure.

Yet it was the only fine saying in the war"
said Eleanor. And how completely we
have forgotten it!" she said. Exclaimed
~~We don't seem to have remembered it" said~~

Not much point in it, was there? said
Peggy, as they glanced at the inscription.

as they passed;

~~Just~~ So what I was thinking said Eleanor.
That man's face! Yes, she continued as
they shot into darkness again. We were call suppressed, Peggy:
~~suppressed, Peggy~~. what you call" She realised
Yes that's true: but –: with some amusement that she was falling into the
elderly habit of praising her youth, of
resenting criticism, What was I going to say?
we had ideals – what d'you call them: ideas
standards, what d'you call 'em!
But then people hadn't made such fools
of themselves in your day. Eleanor" said
Peggy.

Oh that face! "

Yes, that's it," said Eleanor. Now I
think he's going almost past the street where
Eleanor lives – that we just take in? No.
Well, what were we saying: Yes: that's what
~~strikes me: Take your generation. Yes:~~ they hadn't much
Maggie ~~Eleven. that's~~

NYPL

95

fools of themselves. That's what strikes me, listening to
you all. Maggie, Steven, &c:
But how can could we respect men ~~who~~ . . ."
Peggy began —
~~Yes~~. I'm almost ~~certain~~ sure ~~this is~~ this is the
street ~~out of which~~ Eleanor interrupted.
~~you know this is~~ But which the number is, — I'm
she did tell me — I've forgotten" she peered out.
all the streets are so much alike here" said
Peggy, looking at the shabby houses; "A
sordid neighbourhood," "But they dont
~~suppose~~ ~~suppose~~ they much mind, ~~Elf mind~~," Perfectly
What an odd life! she broke off.
content, ~~talking. Never seems to mind~~. I
shall never forget —"
Why does she always choose such sordid
places to live in? she said. "Why — ~~but~~
I ~~suppose" she added~~ the old picture of a "hat —
bright green cricket field, & ~~hat &~~ flowery, her
light dresses, & an ill dressed stooping girl, her ~~Oh have~~
cousin, came back to her.
Why . . . In those days,
"~~of course, we had always said~~ of course we always took it
~~of a man~~ for granted, Eleanor continued, that ~~if a man~~
a ~~man had her profession, a woman had her~~
~~home~~ — But yes, than for
'I've no doubt it was ~~much~~ easier for us, ~~our~~ we took a
you. Eleanor continued. I never could
great deal for granted.
get on with Edward's friends. Hugh. she added.
I thought them the dreariest of young men.
What I liked was the family — the Levys.
And a lower man called Dutter. I

NYPL

I can remember.

Oh these are so fascinating, Peggy prompted her. well coming back to the drawingroom at Abercorn Terrace, & saying, they enjoy themselves so much more than we do. ~~It may have been~~ that one didn't understand. Only it always seemed to me such a dreary way of spending one's life— Edward: Morris your father, ~~he~~ had a passion for the law ever since he was a little boy. Yes. ~~And~~ Morris I, very largely, who persuaded Papa. At the same time, ~~what a~~ aren't these professions— isn't it largely that? after all, I can't be too thankful in a way— ~~isn't it~~ Call it 'suppressed'— Yes: but Morris your father is in the Law courts, day after day: yes. I don't know that I think they've solved the question.. Education. Only there we are back at the beginning— what do we want to be? What sort of life do we want to lead? Oh dear, she sighed, ~~she sighed~~, ~~what~~ only what a question to ask! when I saw that when I read that paper. & you can't help seeing man's face:— & everywhere— then I do ask myself, haven't people forgotten, haven't they gone crazy. what is wrong with men?

In

Why what do they do it for.

That man face
That man face.

~~Did~~ Do you remember Aunt Eugenie? Peggy interfered. The horror was coming over her— Aunt age.

Yes. Lilies in the kitchen. Flowers in a milk jug. She now, she talked. That's where Elvira gets it from. [illegible]

NYPL

pulling a flower to her mouth always as if it were a
cigarette. And her gesticulation — I can give you no idea
of them: only Eleanor imitates her. But there again
Peggy: how difficult to judge. An incredible
figure nowadays. And yet. I was saying to Bobby
only the other day, I never go past the house
in Westminster without ~~feeling~~ — thinking of the italian
[illegible], & the coming along the passage to open
the door: & the coldness of the room: but as
they had such lovely things — For example. There was
a cabinet there Maggie has: & a blue chair —
they were worth the priceless now. ~~Only~~,
Only. we remembering one always makes up
that is, what I remember isn't of course
the silver silly tiresome things: no: &
so ~~my pa~~ that's what why it's so important
at your seventy odd, to be take them
journeys: or one would get entirely out of
touch: to meet people who know nothing:
~~or~~ like that rather interesting man,
Pickersgill. What am I to them! Why,
an old maid. And so we start fresh.
So we take each other on our merits.
Abercorn. It was to return in that whole day,
arranging things — like that old Stanley you.
when you want remember: you know,
the inherited a Romney: no I never a
piece of plate. One doesn't want to be a

They were held up. People were pouring out of
the theatres. Women men. women in evening dress
were running about in the middle of the street.
There was the usual confusion & stir; people
put waved their arms, dodging in & out; cars

that Peggy was in some way not embittered,
but disillusioned. For example he

NYPL

thats whats one's got to avoid" The word that Peggy
had used 'suppressed' still rankled, very slightly:
~~& she felt a desire to~~ she felt some desire to
justify herself. Peggy
"Thats ~~exactly~~ what I'm saying" said Peggy. "Thats
what I envy: thats what I admire. ~~Your standard~~
~~Eleanor — your~~
~~It seemed to her that~~ Again Eleanor had become
the Aunt, the representative of the older
generation whom she was describing to her
friend at the hospital. "What you feel
about them is," she put it tentatively to [illegible].
is that they 'live ac~~cording~~ to a plan.' She
is seventy: I'm not going to mope about,
fiddling with dear papa's dear mamma's
whatever [illegible] been. I'm off to India;
Where are you off to next?" she asked.
"Depends on the Argentines" said Eleanor.
Her journeys depended on the state of her
investments. She had cut down her living
expenses to almost nothing, Peggy reflected. Cheese & eggs.
She ~~had a woman in.~~ ~~There was~~
& a woman in to wash up.
George says we talk of nothing but money — complaining
politics," said Eleanor.
~~And to think of all that money" said Peggy:~~
~~Just for the sake of —~~
~~Why didn't he think of that at the time?" said~~
~~Peggy~~ ~~Not much~~ good in saying that now" said
Peggy. Now, when they came to the house
there would be the difficulty about
the cab: she would insist upon paying: she was
better off than Eleanor: Eleanor would insist upon
paying. She surreptitiously fingered the coins
in her purse. She would thrust out & give
them to the cabman. They were getting

Yes: But
whats
the use of

getting near. She glanced at the face on the taximeter:
Of course its absurd to think of it now. Eleanor continued,
but when you think what they might have done
with that money.. When you think what the:
result has been... But However, I'm now in
the least dependent, she added. 'One effect of
travel is, in the first place, Europe isnt the whole
world; the world's much bigger than one thinks,
& how ~~far~~ are we right in being
that ~~Europes~~ Englands not the whole world; Europes not the
whole world — the beauty of some places I saw — it
was incredible: & you see a black woman
washing her clothes in the stream: what does it
matter to her what we're doing here? And the
beauty of the world! dear me, there are many
Consolations for growing old: beauty becomes
so much more real! & they cant touch
that I said to myself over & over again: Even
that poor fool who thinks he's going to put us all in
different coloured blankets clothes, he! — well,
thes'll go on inches of them: & his nearly
little schemes: & not that he's much worse
than we are — always wanting something
for ourselves — that's the most detestable of all
human qualities — possessiveness. Why should we
try to possess things? You're never shocked are
you! Neither am I. But theres a great
deal that's common sense in the gospels:
psychologically speaking, its so true: as one finds
out. Did I mind selling all the things we had
at Abercorn Terrace? Not a bit. Yet Eugenie
hated me for it. How you'll miss your
mother's writing table! I didn't. Thats the
greatest thing not to possess it. : And the
other thing: yes, about longer travel — the
other thing that struck me, so very forcibly

you see, travelling, one realises

always gradually grabbing-

NYPL

100

when one has to mix up with all kinds of people, on board
ship; or in little out of the way places where they all
swarm about & talk — one has to, coming where
they've never seen a white person for months —
the other thing that struck me was, if it weren't for.
people getting up like that odious man in a
uniform, that bully. — oh there are so
many of them everywhere — well, we'd get on
perfectly well. ~~with~~ Everybody I met said to me,
Don't you believe what they tell you in the
newspapers — I said, ~~No~~ you needn't tell me
that. ~~And~~ But ~~to~~ And nothing could be
more friendly; & when you feel, as I do,
everybody — even porters — the man who took my
luggage — where was it — ? so sensible, so
friendly: what we've got to do, drawn to me is
to

As her Aunt ran on, Peggy fingered the coins;
[illegible] & decided that she would jump out of the cab,
& pay the driver &

NYPL

1934
June 23rd

"Thats Eleanor" said George. He put down the receiver & turned to Elvira. "She wants you to come to that party" he said ~~sitting down beside her again~~.

"What? what?" said Elvira. She was still swinging her foot. Her detachment irritated him. Had she been sitting all these years ~~[illegible]~~ saying Can I cant I, do I dont I, shall I shant I?

"Elvira, sitting on the edge of her chair, with a smudge on her face" he said, as he sat down.

Probing her own description, "with a smudge on her face" she repeated after him: "That I should have left out... Its a matter of taste," she said, laughing, & ~~drawing herself up~~ hunching herself up, in her seat: "what to put in what to leave out." They were silent for a moment. It was not her fault, George reflected. ~~[illegible]~~, if your name dubbed you, so that presumably, other children laughed; horrid little boys & girls pointed fingers; then, clothes didnt fit & so on: ~~by degrees, naturally~~, she had then naturally by ~~degrees~~ – . Yet, when he heard Eleanors voice, & thought of his sister Peggy, who was dining with Eleanor, & compared them with Elvira, who had never done a stroke of work all her life, & living on the outskirts of the real world, kept up this perpetual dangling & swinging & singing of queer snatches of song...

"What did she say?" she asked.

~~Who was~~ "~~She &~~ ~~Peggy are~~ Rose & she going to the party" he said.

She & Peggy he said

as turns to a bell wh. had ceased to ring.

NYPL

"Dancing together" said Eleanor. "As jumps Eleanor
in the middle of a sentence. "That reminds me — she
says. ~~Heavens, says~~ Land above us, says Peggy:
or some such expression; ~~that~~ Old Nelly's all over:
always interrupting the sequence of conversation:
~~Peggy. having~~ for they had been talking ~~of the~~
~~growth of~~ spread of tuberculosis among miners:
No," ~~she~~ her eyes brightened. & she straightened
herself: they had been saying the ~~wife of a~~
cost of living in the mining districts . . . effect on
children: Then she jumps up: your sister Peggy
has one of those minds which cling, firmly yet
with a certain nervous desperation, to the said
of fact: She is no longer young. How
shall I describe your sister! Eyes like a
hair undescript Nature, in her mood of
daily toil; acquiescing in the routine of
turning her wheel as women turn the handle of
pumps. No, that's not it. She has
Peggy has something formidable; she doesn't
come her ~~[illegible]~~ further back to look at: coming into a
sick room: plunging her instruments in carbolic:
they dance; why do we dance she says.' And
she should be cutting blue flowers: No, she said,
after her mother died, — your mother — town:
that's not a living wage: & so came to town:
with an ~~instinct~~ .. in short,
Doesn't
I dont like her, because, when no one
~~Uncle~~, & yet, suppose we were to find another
after making your letter
alone, in a room, better half sorrowful
remarks, there being polishing her nails, she would
sayings; or be certainly not yet, life has passed me by.
No, I can't imagine her saying, or midsummer
day, what one hopes be never comes,

NYPL

seeing a chariot wheel round the corner of the square,
Gravely rather she would draw her skirts to her,
& ~~gently~~ proceed to her destination: You
know what she reminds me of — ' something
beautifully pressed, small, hard, but fine .
blue; one of those flowers, wild hardy little
blue flowers, that can be made into towels
& table cloths — blue, like the early dawn:
blue like shepherds eyes: so she can bear it
when Eleanor wanders: can't endure them
random interruptions, she thinks. If I can't
find the right hat for the fourth of June, how.
~~Now~~ what swagger on the hunchback's part,
flouting the law of nature, which insists that
the fathers of Eton boys... Yes."
Which party?, What party?' she said, running
hastily. She took out her handkerchief —
scrubbed her face — on the wrong side.
"The other side, Eleanor" he said.
Perhaps the crisis, sometimes, in the middle of the
night" she said. Well, after all, what the point of is a frog"
about it must seem, when one's in the glass
the rose is looked at hardly in the glass
"the sort of thing I say". She
smudge is now removed" she added,
& it wasn't much of a smudge after all.
So that now, that interruption begone —
thus what constitutes Peggy - interruption -
we can return to the question we were
discussing, about the young man who sat on a
each of fool: whose word had turned to ~~in that, what~~ got
fools ~~Cousins~~: ~~& who said,~~
~~out~~ fierce on that: who's
now I have enough to live on ?

NYPL

He had tried to hurt her, just now himself, he reflected:
~~because she~~ & yet he had not hurt her. Probably
people who have been bullied when they are young,
find ways of protecting themselves. ~~Perhaps too,~~
~~Is~~ Is that the origin of art he asked .
himself: ~~phrase making~~, ~~Singing~~: making
yourself immune by making an image!
He was interested in the origin of art, since he
wrote poetry; had indeed taken great pains
with his letters in the old days; & must
might write now perhaps.
"About the smudge—" she said, & took another
handkerchief & scrubbed her other cheek ~~eyes~~ cheek. "Elvira" he said
The other side ~~wrong cheek~~, the wrong cheek.
She got up & looked at herself in the glass.
"And perhaps she cries sometimes in the middle
of the night" she said, wiping off the smudge.
"The smudge is now ~~removed~~" she said, sitting
down again.
"And ~~too~~ you, what about the young man who
sat on a sack of gold, whose wool had
turned to gold: George or whatever: who's
got enough to live on?"
~~Only for a year or two.. he said~~
when the telephone rang, they had reached that point
the eternal wanderer, he said; A phrase like that,
he thought, certainly ~~puts one~~ produced in a particular
atmosphere. Also the table cloth had been a
~~was~~ a field, & the salt cellar a sheep, &
~~something else was something else~~..
Following up his notion that humpbacks,
misfits ~~or anyone whose~~ take refuge from the brutality
of the world, he somehow, he ~~brushed aside~~

NYPL

~~her~~ wanted to ask her, do you call me a 'returned
wanderer' because we were all such brutes to you? -
For "as a 'returned wanderer' — & in a sense there
was — he felt himself extraordinarily like an
a matted haired, primitive, breaking in upon a
settled company of men — he was
interested in what people meant: especially in poetry:
especially in the extraordinarily interesting state of
mind which produced — [illegible] such a
poem casually — poetry.

["A shadow like an angel, with bright hair"
he read]

Yes, she ~~said~~; she looked at the book. She
turned to the title page;
With whats wrong with it! she said.
"Oh form", he went on, to picture the
blackening agonies of that same man:
his stubborn hearts, in the veldt; why he
cleared to tell the truth; what he
saw & did & felt out there;
~~who has~~
"A shadow like an angel, with bright hair" she
~~re~~-remembered.

I never altogether gave up reading he said
And asking myself, what's the poetry of?
I used to imagine you, with a pen in your hand.
by way of armour." when the sheep coughed."
With shakes, after all, — he hesitated —
a common vice.
Making up ~~stories~~ things that don't exist...
pretending that the world is ~~[illegible]~~ all

NYPL

is all in one play? A play consists of so many
scenes. A play is either a tragedy or a comedy.
A dream. I've known people who take to
it like a drug. I've known
A tragedy scene, a comedy? or which else?
a satire upon modern society?

Society parodies,
while one lives —
or a

Write a play about life as it is — the telephone rings:
& the girl coming in with the mutton. Let it be
broken up: in a new language: ~~a great~~
~~improvement upon the~~ an improvement upon
the old. For example, the telephone rings, & there's
Eleanor in her room, at the top of the house.
And there's here an one -. But where's the
Centre! ~~Like~~ A shadow like an angel,
with winged hair — / Come to think of it — she
took the book in her hand — ~~plays~~ "What I want
plays aren't made as phrases:
What's the butler say?" - Delicious party!"
If you were a playwright; all the
lovers converging? And still you'd have to
end it somehow! And what end is
getting?

Precisely. What end is getting?
When I ~~went up~~ left to Eleanor last night,
& walked through Piccadilly, ~~for~~: are we here.
A ~~sense of fate~~? why,
What keeps us here? ~~But then a great~~ A sense of the compulsion:
A sense of duty? A sense of being
part of the traffic?"
~~Well, but I'm~~ Yes; its a very exciting

NYPL

107

theme. a magnificent tragedy.
I don't complain of the poverty of modern life:
lo And the great things are always the least
unimportant.
Well, but perhaps the poet is the man
who combines,
So scattered — so busy.
Yes, but suppose that is the tragedy. our
sense of beauty broken: I daresay all poets:
private people, poets are private people:
I never walk through a field but I don't feel
a vegetarian one; whether it's among the woods
Corn, or a sense of all the lives, everywhere —
But the old people had a story
Oh nothing but read a cottage here..
My dear Clara: how the whole of [illegible] looks.
Not accurate:
~~Tell me then: it is a~~ ma
Oh that you get out by tonight telephone —
A body was found washed in here
Naked on the beach.
And the last telephone rang:
Tell me, where you very unhappy when you were a
child:
I would tell you the whole story of your life,
beginning yesterday:
Doubtless, when you came in at the door
you noticed on the door post 3 names,
The top was Abraham!
So it begins.

NYPL

than an intercourse, he thought bitterly of saying
Come to the party, its a dear party, or hand me the
breadsauce. Whereas the interesting things are:
just people: — Elvira, for example, with all her
graces & fears; her bluff; her wish to know dust in
her eyes: her exasperations; her moods; her violence:
her pettiness; her selfishness; her — he stopped.
Always in judging a person in the room, a
quality stole out that turned all measurements to
moonshine, like damp rusting steel: so that all
fiction, he glanced at the book he had opened
when Elvira went out of the room to
wash, ineffectively, was lost. For ~~this reason~~ one:
that you go out of the room to wash: ~~that you~~
lose touch with your subject. He had lost touch
with dozens of & fiction subjects characters. But
of prose were useless to deal with that
hampered angular, yet very characteristic pose; — the
~~was~~ had a way of moving her hands that was
Ex~~tremely like~~ her, perhaps poetry would be
nimbler, subtler: would, by its rhythm,
the unseen force under the word, capture
just that ripple of life? She sat up
& said. How delicious silence is — I was
thinking…

What? he asked.

Of a horse mowed under with apple blossom.
Corn whispering outside. Whether its sunlight or
moonlight I dont know: but there I am,
sitting on the porch, looking thighs trembling —
what d'you call em? — at the stars.

Then it must have been night.

Not necessarily. I look up & say to myself,

NYPL

rose of the [illegible]
star:

Now I have cut off the ~~old jotting~~ sentiment & I have
outdistanced my pursuers: ~~now~~ I have unhoarded the
rose & the star. And the moth's flight. Now I
have clasped to my heart ~~the~~ Knowledge: ~~of~~ [illegible].
Nothing can take away such moments: ~~Peace. She said,~~
& yet how damned silly they are. Well, isn't
that silly?" she concluded. "The sort of thing that
annoys your sister Peggy. ~~And~~ All because of
somebody wobbling on a horn. ~~Or do you~~
think ~~what Nicholas~~ said ~~today~~ was true:

~~What?~~ ~~But~~ Yes of course, we have to talk.

~~And, then. Peace.~~

The other thing that interested him, he thought, was talking.
Ever since people had walked about, they had
thought just as she thought — & as he thought:
about them, roses: ~~also~~ about breaking: also about
knowledge. But ~~it was only by [illegible]~~
~~But they had to talk.~~ The rose & the star were symbols:
~~were merely~~ too pink & white symbols. And the
nightingale ~~too~~ that she had plucked out of his
old letter. ~~Little~~ Senseless bits of poetry that came
into his head. Yet all broken, &
unintelligible — merely a phrase here & there; because of the
because of her presence, he decided; because of the confusion:
stimulus, the excitement, the muddle & perhaps between
~~of~~ ~~As usual~~. the perpetual conflicts ~~was it~~ so that he
body & soul, reality & fact; that feeling belonging
would never be a poet.
he supposed only to those who can somehow —
he copied a picture of flowers, earlier when say
pressing her hands together — Was there some
~~alliance~~ & consummation? If so, did it
typify some further extension; were all

NYPL

~~human beings~~ that what human beings were after;
some enlargement, escape, bursting up, so that
knowledge then was held in the hands!
It seemed to him that everybody ~~was~~ – he
thought of Eleanor last night . & the talk of money .
politics – was kept dancing, desiring;
some had their vision of a state of society, others
of a state of mind: & ~~for the reason that~~ they
as if ~~by some~~ nature applied a gas jet
to the mind, the body, keeping them always on the
bubble, in a state of fizz, ~~wonder~~ agitation,
perpetual ~~unrest~~ stirring: yes indeed for moments
like that.

You still write poetry? she asked. Yes, often,
she ~~continued~~ said: ~~some~~ yet, poor Joyce.
He was reminded, by her gesture, that even if
poetry is too remote, & so it was for him, there
still exists, ~~people:~~ the queer machine – the
twisted body; Elvira. 'creaking'. What?

~~But~~ what is the knowledge? he asked. She
did not want an answer. Lame, broken &
imperfect kept coming into his head
She looked at him, under her eyelids, rather. he
thought, as if he were a wild animal; as if
~~they were~~ at any moment liable to spring:
capable of manslaughter. ~~Little~~ Half lines of poetry
kept coming into her head. He [illegible],

A shadow like an angel with bright hair:
~~Also~~ It the idea came into her head that if
he cd offer her this & this & this
idea of communion; excitement rapture;
of merging; as of excitement that comes from the

NYPL

But
So sincere were people, that ~~so~~ if you even repeated
the words after them, in fright, they ~~so~~ were off.
Why were they ~~frightened! who~~ were the partners!
~~Bear it~~ ~~Taking up her own words~~ Wars,
~~Brought her own rages~~
Yes: a state of mind that we reach in company,
with some creature: but in order to preserve it, we have to
remain silent
Knowledge, she added. The costly remark that cost
any few silver" she laughed. And now the fat girl
will come & clear away coffee.

Where does it come from? she asked.
~~A spirit~~ Shadow like an angel with bright hair,
she repeated

It was that that they had shared, he thought.
An enormous world. All his muscles relaxed.
A sense of peace & harmony came over him. He
She had taken the book, & was ruffling the pages.
~~Yes, my the wood,~~ She had lost the place.
Where ~~does~~ did it come? she asked
~~A shadow~~ A shadow like an angel with bright hair.
The word bright shone out ~~as~~ with extraordinary
vividness.
Don't you like, she said, using her hands once more as
if they modelled something, making it up all over
again; & then, it occurs to me, in a flash,
how these minutes, whatever it was — she
searched among the pages.
Among the things they used to talk about before he
went to the war he remembered was
the possibility of unravelling a whole play or
poem from one word: Talking alone,
it was easy enough to make tremendous
discoveries. He could remember ringing her up

NYPL

at two in the morning simply because he had discovered
something about King Lear. The whole truth, which nobody
except Shakespeare, had ever yet been able to say:
he smiled. ~~Just~~ Give it me" he said
No. I'm on the track of a wonderful, an earth shaking
discovery, she said ~~Only~~ wait; I'll tell you
what the whole play means... He watched her,
fixing the paper. She was not going to let him have
the book he observed. She clutched it & held it firmly.
~~There are the~~ The play began, she said, like the...
she wailed. It was one of her theories he remembered
was that you had to see a phantom architecture;
seeing the theatre before the first spoke: somehow
got into communion, not merely with the word,
but with the age & the theatre — even imagining some
crowds there; even creating a few little figures, which also

Cut orders

dotting them about in stalls & galleries; ~~un~~ or being
~~a loose~~ so that the particular scene ~~too hym the said~~;
was ~~unexpanded~~ extremely complex — & ~~Now~~, few" she interrupted.
she began. ~~But~~ Oh damn the few
For a moment he thought that she had created
some two distinct, sounding figures: a man who
a man who would help the action with oranges... He
never ~~liked her~~ approved of her habits: it was apt to
lead to such irrelevancies; or to seeing plays acted which
bothered him. ~~Give me the book he said.~~
· He's not going to wait, she said: he's going to fill
it in all the bits ~~which~~ but that's
not what I mean: it's leaving a track of slime
· round the edge of the water.
She looked up at the ceiling. A sound of
thrumming footsteps was heard overhead. Water
was running. But was she thinking of the play
or the reality: ... she knew two
leaving a track of slime ... on the side of the tank.
hooks in the ground,

NYP'

It became obvious, as she listened, that some one was having a bath. ~~She could hear the~~ The man, whoever, it was, had turned on the water; had then gone to his room, & was undressing. They could hear [illegible]-ally rather heavily from side to side, as if he were getting off the clothes.

If Abrahamson is going to have a bath, whats the good of reading the Tempest? she asked.

She waited: It was the Tempest, he saw, looking over her shoulder. So what would she be imagining?

The Jew, she said. He heard water running. Was it in the play, or out of the play? for a second he did not know. ~~A whole~~ The expression on her face changed; it was replaced. There were heavy steps going upstairs: The steps on the floor above. [illegible] she said. It was He'll leave a track of slime on the floor. over. She dropped the book on the floor.

Now what about the party? she asked.

Then he heard a step. ~~Between~~ Was it in the play or in the room? For a moment he was not sure.

He's turned on the water" she said.

He listened. Water was running. As it ran, the play, the thing they were creating together, which Elvira had been making, wore thin. collapsed. Her expression changed completely.

~~The Jew having a bath she said~~

"The Jew, she said, "having a bath—

NYPL

act another play!

So now, she said, jumping up, & spinning round, why not dress up & go to the party? why not ~~pretend~~, act ~~the part~~ ~~another part~~ ~~something~~ else? The part of the returned wanderer will be ~~acted~~ done by George Sarpeli; the part of gay fool by [illegible] Elvira, her cousin; The ~~Jew, Ahasuerus, having framed this play~~"

Although they had only glanced between the pages of the real play, it was extremely difficult to escape from ~~some~~ its ~~influence~~. "The Jew" was still not a real man; even the sounds in the street ~~had a curious effect, likewise to~~ seemed to have submitted to some control ~~for a~~ moment sounded oddly in time, ~~arranged~~. George ~~could only~~ felt that ~~he would speak~~ it was impossible to speak naturally ~~& at~~, second by second. For a moment, the thumping of ~~the~~ feet on the floor above, the sound of rushing water seemed ~~to belong to~~ — George listened to the ~~A~~ rather heavy unequal steps on the floor above, as of somebody undressing, not ~~less real, he~~ more real than usual; as of the man who was undressing was heavier, more sinister, more purpose had given some sinister purpose in what he was doing.

The Jew, George repeated. The bloody & ... he tried to put his feeling into words; into a single phrase: but the influence was fading; it was no longer strong enough to compel his tongue. It was becoming more & more obvious that it was only the lodger [illegible] taking a bath. He had a aversion towards

NYPL

115

the plan, the matter of fact. Even the brutal, after this
rush of an another decision:
"Who is this damned Jew?" he said.
"Abrahamson," said Elvira.
She settled down in her chair again. They heard
him come downstairs go into the bathroom, which was
opposite, & lock the door.
"Isaac, not that he ever asked me to call him
by his Christian name... I saw the name on the door"
[illegible] remembered.
"~~He~~ in the tallow trade," said Elvira.
Something to do with Barcelona. ~~Consignments of~~
~~tallow~~. Goes round to the west end hotels..
She would make a good
Soap ~~you know~~. Converted over here, then the young lady to
whom he is engaged in – Bremen? – ~~would~~ ~~[illegible]~~
Hamburg? The Hague! – ~~But of course, she~~
~~marry him~~" she broke off. She listened:
But the bath, she observed: "will have a line
to him sponging & wallowing." a faint line of grease,
~~wave it~~, tomorrow morning: a faint line of grease, ~~That's the~~
like that rich. the tide leaves –.
Mrs– Story I was ~~forget to tell~~ you" she interposed.
She looked at her cousin: "If you'd like to hear a
~~you were asking about [illegible] the added~~.
Yes, Eff, he said feeling in his pocket for a pipe,
~~Let's be candid. Let's be~~ "Come along now." he
~~was being laughing~~: amazed. Like a sailor
Exalted; the head was jerked up in his
Every clothes; a stained wanderer: What's the
story?"
"It begins on Waterloo Bridge," she said.
"I was standing on Waterloo Bridge" he began.
2 I said to myself–" ..
I was standing on Waterloo Bridge & I said to myself

NYPL

116

she repeated after him:: Well the ~~water had rushed~~
river was flowing...

Yes, yes, he interposed. the thought
remembered again ~~how~~ ~~he~~ how necessary it had
always been to him, in talk, as in reading, to sketch
the surroundings first, as if she were not ~~acting~~
talking ag[illegible] nothing, but somebody she observed.
~~Yes the river was very high.~~ some distant
figure who had to be placed, whether on a
bridge or in a field–

Yes. I was ~~in one~~ of those little bays, where
~~one strand~~, & [illegible] looking down at the water:
no, that's wrong: I was walking down the Strand;
~~oh hate of your own way~~ – he said, found
humanely. A few false starts were
~~as~~ ~~pa~~ &; pardonable. after all, in writing a story,
he often found that the beginning was the
difficulty: ~~the~~ ~~to strike the right note~~

"It was ~~precisely~~ nine o'clock on a fine
winter's day" she began afresh. "~~And no letters~~ .
& tho she repeated
~~Better perhaps~~ he repeated
And a ~~smear of~~ rancid butter,
of the breakfast table, the stained at the dinner table
on the dessert dish remained, presented nothing to
Cheer, nothing to Mummie, nothing to set in motion
~~Chest~~ Muscovi; ~~that we are~~ – you see Kind
how separate things look on such occasions? How
compromising look of butter:

NYPL

I jumped out of bed on a cold winter's morning, she
began, but it was clear that words had very little
power to convey the feeling she wished to give.
"There was a line of grease — a line of grease," she
repeated. The man Abrahamson had left a line of
grease. And I the ~~grand daughter of a man who~~
~~might have been a bishop. I said to myself.~~
I could hear him snorting as he sponged himself.
~~And~~ I the granddaughter of a bishop.. Well,
I said to myself, plunge in & have done with it.
And what was odd, perhaps, was ~~simply~~ this:: the tea & the
I couldn't. And the breakfast, ~~& the~~
egg & all that, waiting for me here — she pointed
to the table — unwashed as I was, & with that
image in my eyes — the line of grease: he's
~~hairy you know~~.. or ~~from~~ how they seemed to be
waked up, disorderly like frying pan, old pack, the litter of
mixed with banana skins: my breakfast.
Egyptian of some wicked polluted city: & no
The eggs bad. And outside rain falling: to shine
jewel in the whole world bright enough
through that mask. And the human face. My dear
smacked by Mr Blow that may be taking the
part of the ham. Then: gulping sobs, a she
cleared away her bloom: form; Then
help my ah, I said: the unexplored region
under the window, marching like geese in a
row: then the ~~f~~ bagpipes. Hymns from the
sodden & servile city. The city
creeping at the worshipping its god. So out I went, in
down the Strand along the ~~bank of the river~~..
& there it stopped. I said to myself, Abbey

NYPL

About ten o'clock on this rainy winter morning: no
fogs even in the Strand, only roar, rasping;
irremediable. & the flood of traffic; & I like a
weed washed this way that way. I like a
weed. she repeated which the tide carries
this way. that way, a weed that has no
being of its own; but serves only to darken the river;
for I had no hat, no breakfast, wch.
~~a scream~~ to me in a clap: yes yes yes...
The interruption ~~destroyed~~ ~~had~~ seemed to have the
~~effect of changing~~
yes: at ~~that point~~ then, she continued, taking this
interruption to mean that she had given too much
prominence, perhaps, to the particular mood
she was describing she changed her method. whether [illegible]
She supposed that the person — matter — weeping in
her own or not did not suddenly thrown off its
on the bridge, had suddenly thrown off its
gloom.

I turned on him — that was a man
coming towards me .. a little dapper clerk —
Lord, I said, d'you think you can keep me
in this dismal situation for more than
ten minutes by the clock? I said to him,
Aren't I the grand daughter of a bishop myself? And
then I was flooded with a most
welcome desire; Laughter you know. How
ridiculous people are if you look at them!
their noses. their eyes: the strutting
pantaloon ferociously:
silly confidence; the air of the hair, red, probably
the tiptoeing; the citizen whatever way to
self approving glance of the
~~her living~~ business: ~~Letters~~ all ridiculous
I said. o... how I skip — for here I meant to tell

NYPL

explain that I had bitter money hand; so off I went to
the Office: & spreadled myself. I said to the old
boy covered with medals at the door, this is to be
made, was wrestled, introduced: I wont
stand this again I said: but here

She stopped to see if she had conveyed the feeling her ~~meaning~~
of having breakfast without a bath:
She had skipped to rather two part.
'You put on your hat & coat & walked along the
Embankment" said Sara. 'Yes! not having had a bath - Yes.
And there ~~were~~ were people passing: ~~bad~~ strutting
bantams: deploring the party: the ferret eyed; the
hard little nuts; shrivelled little nuts: bowler hatted;
~~And~~ ~~so~~ a vast army of servitors. Of
moneymakers: time servers; whip snappers; And
~~perms~~ & sycophants I said, Must I too join your
conspiracy: Sell my soul; &, impoverish the
blood royal of England? She threw her head back:
And rage on, to this damned humbug: &
I crouch under cloths: & serve a meal:
& make thirty bob a week all because of a
Jew in my bath: into a kind of rhythm. The
The words ran themselves when they were alone:
It was an old habit, exaggeration; the
he remembered No. 2 in spite of the artificiality the stops & jumps,
& the feeling of it & that she was never
it seemed to him
more natural & at her ease than when she
used language which to anyone coming in suddenly
would have seemed silly hotchpotched. So
that perhaps ~~For~~ the ordinary talk of people
is ~~not~~ also all nothing but a ready made

NYPL

– Eleanor's very upset – to Delia frankly. so on – i
nothing but ready made reach me down stuff he cries:
a bowler hat; a pepper & salt overcoat he added.
uneasily he ran on description of the procession. what he
had often seen, of clerks & typists going along
Waterloo Bridge of a morning to their offices.
Only from time to time he put in a word, or two
to verify the position.
Thirty bob a week because of a few in your bath he
damned stuff.. ~~that~~ here.
~~cat, how~~? She reached out & took the
~~long~~ newspaper cutting which he had read earlier
in the evening. It was simply: an account of a
fashionable wedding.

Even the particularity & delicacy of tone: the
costumes: Lady Mabel wore puce coloured
velvet; & the Duchess of Pimlico had ..
stars in her hair. For sea. I had a
letter in my pocket – She snatched
an envelope at the stove to represent the
letter. Armed with the ~~talis~~man I
approached the door.

A newspaper office? ~~Grey~~ lettering
Massive door, tiny & tiny. written on the;
Hamburg. Ah for that little inn.
abandon truth justice & common sense.
So I went in. along corridors piled with
people past mahogany doors. I am the
grand daughter of a man who should
have been a bishop – she nodded
at the black silhouette ~~coat~~ of their

July 1st
1934